THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE

PSM3

May 2007
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www.psm3mag.com

PlayStation 3 ... PSP

REVIEWED!

Ratchet And Clank PSP
Medal Of Honor Vanguard
Elder Scrolls: Oblivion
Call Of Duty PSP
Harvest Moon PSP
The Red Star
flOw

EXCLUSIVE!

DEVIL MAY CRY 4

DEVIL WORSHIP: Why you'll hand it to the best DMC yet

PLUS!

GDC report Manhunt 2 **Loco Roco PS3**
UK PS3 launch GTA4 **Trevor McDonald: Burnt...**

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PSM3 Start

"The future's brighter than you know"

The plan, or rather the *excuse*, was to keep growing the beard until we got our first 90% scoring game... which lasts until page 54, with our review of the stunning adventure *Oblivion*. Our RPG expert has played the game, across multiple formats, for over *600 hours*, but – if you'll excuse the link – you can see PS3's future today in our '20 games that shape PS3' supplement, proudly presented with this issue. Furry LocoRocos? *Little Big Planet*? *Home*? One month after PS3's so-so launch line-up, we've never been more optimistic about Sony's misunderstood, but hugely powerful, console. Enjoy the issue – we'd love to hear your thoughts on www.psm3mag.com soon.

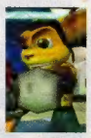
In the making of this issue of PSM3...
35 pestering emails about furry LocoRocos
1 PS3 launch
Thousands of happy new PS3 owners

Daniel Dawkins Editor
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

The PSM3 Promise

The sharpest opinions
Every bit of the magazine is dedicated to giving you more information. If we're worried that a feature in a game isn't working, we'll not only tell you about it, but we'll have a word with the developer too.

The biggest games
Fact is, if a game makes it into the pages of PSM3 then it's something worth knowing about. PSM3 says no to lazy page fillers and boring 'me too' games.



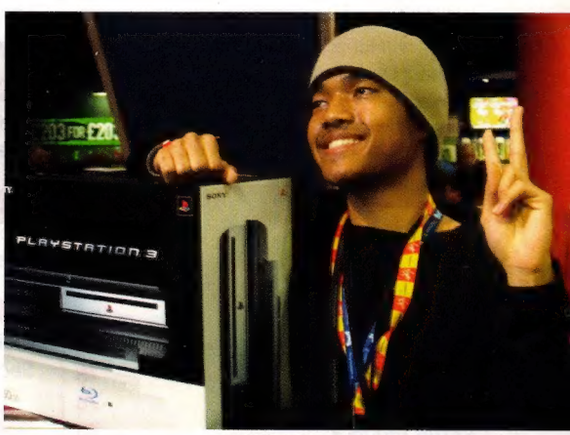
The richest detail
We finish every game we review. Our secrets are the result of us playing the game and finding them ourselves. We've got what you want to know and tell you how you want to hear it.

The most committed videogame mag team
The PSM3 team live and breathe PlayStation. There's no game we haven't played and there's no end to our quest for knowledge and gaming greatness.

The best DVD action
We've got the best DVD in the business. We cram it with the best PS3, PS2 and PSP games each and every month. For free.

Three to read first...

"A free gift for all the PS3 faithful – a 46-inch hi-definition TV"
The PlayStation 3 launch goes with a bang – page 8



"Reason to kiss your life goodbye"
We review the amazing Oblivion – page 54

"A large minority will adore it, but will the majority even bother?"
Social networking game Home announced. Read our verdict – page 80

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The PlayStation 3 Magazine

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The most stylish game in the world ignites PS3. We tell you all about it.
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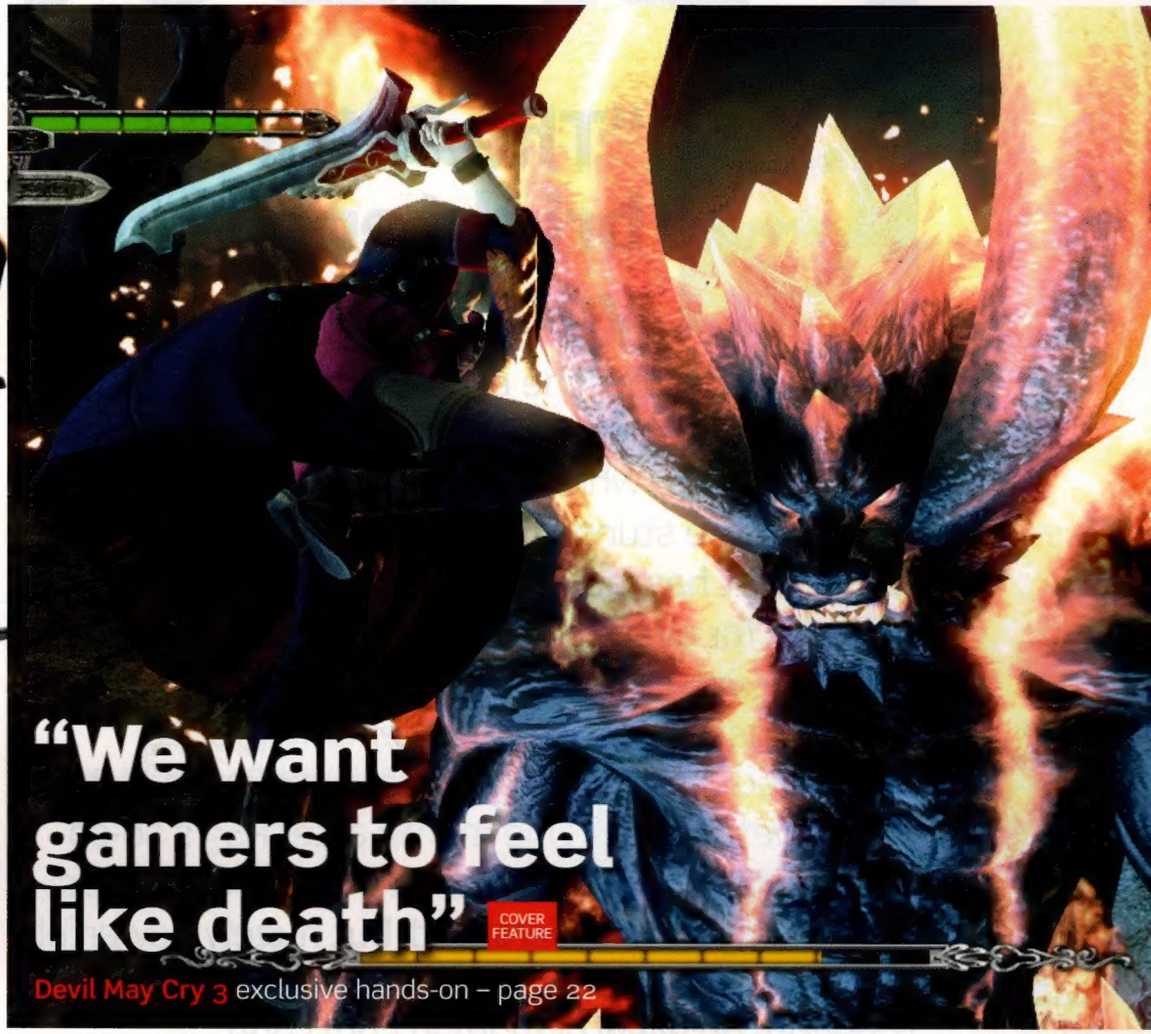

"We want gamers to feel like death"

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Destroy Trevor McDonald in *Def Jam: Icon*.

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100 Nation
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Laugh more than a tickled hyena.

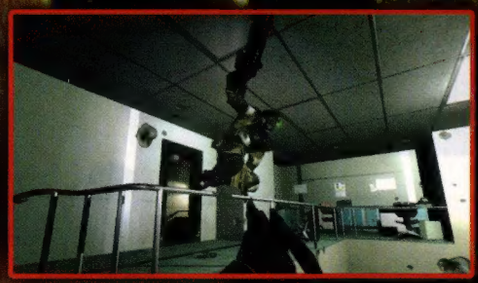
"You're a robot who must learn about love"

Why Harvest Moon is one of the most lovely, if peculiar, games on PSP – page 68

See Ratchet: Size Matters on page 60

"THIS IS THE FINEST PS3 SHOOTER YET"

9/10 - PSW



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SPRING 2007

WHATISFEAR.COM

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PLAYSTATION 3

MONOLITH

DAY 1 STUDIOS

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On this month's DVD

DVD Highlights Packed with the latest PS3, PS2 and PSP videos

THE PLAYSTATION 3 MAGAZINE
PSM3 DVD
Over two hou
Station 2 & PSP video
MANHUNT 2
Psychotic scenes from Rockstar's brutal sequel
SPIDER MAN 3
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STAR WARS: FORCE UNLEASHED
Must-see demo proves PS3's hidden force
FEATURING Hellboy | Tekken 6 | Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2 | Assassin's Creed Haze | Mist Of Chaos | Making of MotorStorm | God Of War 2 | Little Britain | And more

Spiderman 3

In-game PS3 footage of a black-suited Spidey running riot across New York. To suit the 'dark' atmosphere of the new film, the cel-shading of *Ultimate Spider-Man* has been ditched in favour of realism. Better than *Spidey 2*? Maybe...

Manhunt 2

Against all expectations, Rockstar have laughed into maniac US lawyer Jack Thompson's face and are releasing a new *Manhunt*. We've seen it and can confirm that it's even more gruesome than the original – preview on page 32.

Star Wars: Force Unleashed

Watch the stunning Euphoria engine in action. It doesn't say much about the game, but those physics are absolutely unbelievable. Even if *Force Unleashed* is poor, smashing wood into splinters will never get old.

Hellboy

More shiny HD comic book hero action, this time the gruff Nazi-slaying demon *Hellboy*. Rather than nick ideas from the films, this game's more along the lines of the original graphic novels, which should please comic book purists.

+ Tekken 6 | **Haze** | Assassin's Creed | **Dark Sector** | God Of War 2 | **Virtua Fighter 5** | F.E.A.R. | **After Burner** | Everybody's Tennis | **Def Jam: Icon** | Gundam | **More**

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Frontline

Hard news, all PlayStation action

PS Free Everyone in the queue got a free 1080p 46" Sony TV. Jealous? *Never.*

PS3 UK LAUNCH

Lucky gamers get free £2000 HD TVs as PS3 launches in Europe

Early PS3 adopters get best present ever, as Sony claim record sales...

PlayStation 3's launch on the night of March 22 at Virgin Megastore's central London branch might have drawn in fewer people than expected, but faced with embarrassment, Sony pulled off an impressive PR coup – a free gift for every one of the PS3 faithful... a gleaming 46-inch high definition television.

It might not have been quite the sell-out atmosphere that Sony were hoping for, but there was no doubting the crowd's delight when Ray Maguire, Managing Director for Sony Europe, delivered a short speech paying tribute to the PS3 hardcore. A crowd of around 150 punters broke into spontaneous cheers and applause as Maguire announced that every single one of them would score £2000 of top-of-the-range televisual hardware along with their brand new console. For free. Don't you wish you'd been there now?

First to snag a console was Ritatsu Thomas, a 17-year-old from Mitcham in South London, who queued for 36 hours to snag his console. "It was terrible at 5am," said Thomas. "About zero degrees Celsius, maybe minus one. I was very cold – I almost got frostbite in my feet."

The early bird

Thomas was spurred on to queue overnight after arriving late at the Wii launch some months earlier. "I was right at the end of the queue. It was very disappointing and I didn't get my Wii, so I thought I'd try to do better this time." Scores of press photographers surrounded Thomas as he paid for his console at the stroke of midnight, and was later chauffeured home from the event in a Virgin Megastore branded stretch limousine. Not a bad night's work.

Around the world The Greek launch got a swordfighting show, while the Finnish launch had a behind-the-scenes porn display for the over-18s. On the flipside, the event in Durban, South Africa, got cancelled when retailer CNA failed to receive their shipment of PS3s. Oops.

Following police advice and media speculation that punters carrying consoles home after the event would be a target for muggers, Sony and Virgin Megastore staff took measures to protect customers. "The police were really concerned at the idea of people walking around the streets with such a valuable and desirable product," Ray Maguire told PSM3. "I mean let's face it, if anything's worth nicking, it's a PlayStation 3. They didn't allow us to have a midnight opening without pulling people into the store first. But Virgin have been really great, they've let us use

ON THE DISC
See the latest PS3 movies on the disc now
PS3/Latest

Number One 17-year-old Ritatsu Thomas was the first gamer in the UK to get a PS3 after queuing overnight.

Press gang In truth, the volume of punters was *slightly* disappointing, but the journos still got a story.

the downstairs of the store for the real die-hards." The basement floor was converted into a impromptu "campsite" for the queuing hardcore, and Sony also laid on complimentary taxis to drop customers back at their front doors.

Good night out

The evening, held across two floors of Virgin flagship Oxford Street store, saw Sony pull out the stops to entertain their most loyal customers. Staff handed out beefburgers, soft drinks and goodie bags containing PlayStation 3 T-shirts, yo-yos and ball-bearing puzzles to the snaking queues. Entertainment included DJs, breakdancers, a basketball juggler and a surprise raffle that saw one man walk away with a free PS3 before he'd even reached for his wallet. Several punters made it to the

PS3 shock | Microsoft crashes PS3's Paris launch

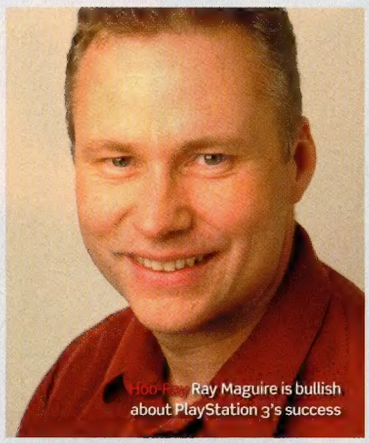
Bill Gates' mob try to upstage PS3's French debut

PlayStation 3's UK launch might not have been the sell-out show Sony were hoping for, but it fared a little better than the festivities on the other side of the channel. The midnight launch in Paris reportedly only attracted around 100 paying punters, with 900 units left on shelves. It may be, of course, that the French were too bright to traipse out to the shops on the banks of the Seine to snap up their console when they could easily order online instead. But it was Microsoft who scooped the headlines, thanks to a piece of guerrilla marketing that saw then sail a barge emblazoned with the words 'XBOX 360 LOVES YOU' past Sony's riverside launch platform. The rascals.

ON THE DISC
Check out PS3's *Spider-Man 3* right now
PS3/Coming Soon

PS3 Interview

PSM3 talks to Sony's managing director Ray Maguire



Hoo-Rah Ray Maguire is bullish about PlayStation 3's success

Hi, Ray. How are you doing?
"Very well! It's been a great night."

There was a bit of a tremor through the audience when you announced everyone buying a console would get a free TV. Do you know how many TVs you've just given away?
"It's more that a hundred, I can tell you that much. These are the first of the pre-order people who decided they would camp out overnight, who have put a lot of effort into coming down here and supporting us. As you know with PlayStation 3, we're moving into a world of high definition, and PlayStation 3 is by far the leader in that race. It's the only one that has true output at 1080p. We wanted to make sure that was recognised by giving everyone here a true 1080 panel. They've now got the ultimate in gaming set-ups with the Bravia W series 46-inch television. The experience they get when they get home is going to be totally amazing, and well worth the time and the effort they've put into supporting us – which we really appreciate."

What else is going to happen tonight?
"We need to get these people home so they can spend the next 24 hours gaming. Not eating, not sleeping, nothing – just getting through *Resistance: Fall Of Man* and *Motorstorm, Formula One, Genji, Virtua Tennis* and so on. Copies of *Resistance: Fall Of Man* were being given away to people in the queue. So hopefully everyone will get home, get online and register so they can claim their free copy of Casino Royale on Blu-Ray. Once they've logged in they should be able to chat to each other online, so if you've met someone and chatted to them in the queue, you can go home and carry on that community online."

What about allocation? Is there enough for everyone?
"Absolutely. We said there was an allocation of about 220,000 units so we've put that out to consumers, and we've shipped more on top of that as well, so when people see their mate's PS3 and want to get one for themselves, rather than having to wait week after week, they'll hopefully be able to go into a shop and pick one up in the next few days. It's a big logistical task for us, but hopefully over the next few days we'll be able to fulfil some of that demand."

Swipes clean Some people had problems with their debit cards, but were still allowed to take machines away.

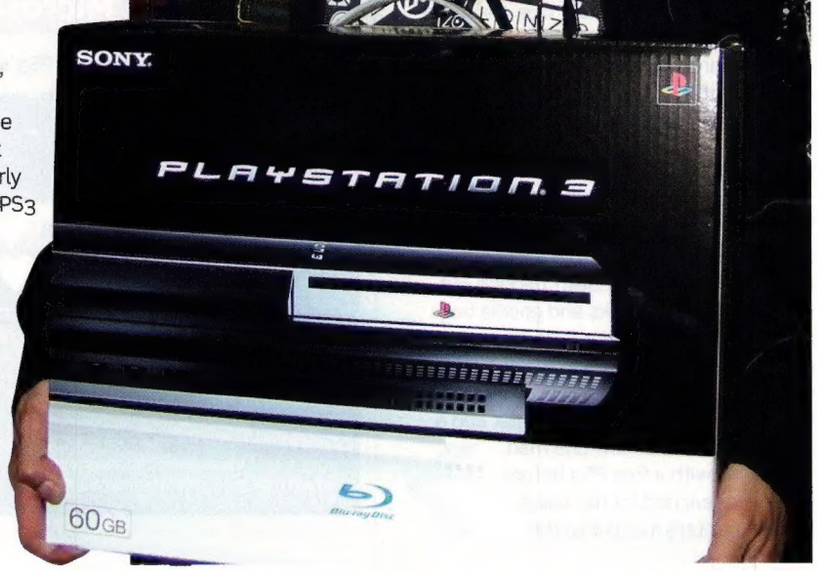
Ball or nothing The lacklustre ball-juggling was soon forgotten when Sony dished out the free TVs.

Homeward bound
Having claimed his PS3, this proud chap heads home in his Sony-paid cab.

cash registers only to find their credit card rejected, but Virgin Megastore staff confirmed the console and TV would be held back for anyone who found themselves unable to pay on the night. Ask for such treatment on a normal shopping expedition one afternoon and see what happens...

Look to the future

Not an ideal night for Sony, then, but after redesigns, delays, and reams of internet conjecture, one suspects they're just glad to get the console onto UK shelves. Early reports suggest PS3 is the biggest selling console launch in UK history (PSP sold 185k, so draw your own conclusions). Our take? It's a quiet success and moral victory for Sony in the face of endless internet negativity.



"New shots reveal enormous levels"
Heavenly Sword page 12

PS3 VOX-POPS

"I haven't been able to sleep"

Meet the dedicated early adopters who queued up on opening night

Debil and Samir, South London

Had you pre-ordered a PS3?

"Yeah, we'd ordered from GAME, but we heard that Virgin Megastore were giving away a free game for the first 50 people here. It's 9pm now and we've been queuing for about an hour. We're going to buy here and then go back to GAME and get our deposit back."

And how's the burger?

"Good! It's beef. I think."

Bill and Baz, West London

Why did you come down tonight?

Bill: "I just had a sudden urge. I've really not been all that bothered about the whole PS3 thing in the lead-up, but it's a new gadget – and the last couple of nights I haven't been able to sleep properly thinking about it!"

Baz: "He does love his toys!"

Have you made any sacrifices to afford it?

Bill: "I'm not going to buy a high definition screen. It was either this or the LCD screen."

Sly, West London

Have you been waiting for PS3 for a long time?

"Yeah, well funnily enough I don't really play games consoles as much as I used to. But I got this game, *God Of War*. I saw my little sisters had it and they were playing it on a PlayStation 2. I actually ended up buying a PlayStation 2 just for that one game. I heard there was a sequel coming out <*but it's on PS2... – PSM3*>, so here I am. And you know what? Right now, I've got a couple of bits floating around the living room and I want one box for everything. The DVD player, the games machine, the Blu-Ray... everything should be in one unit. That's what I'm looking for."

Leila and Jason, London

How long have you been down here?

Jason: "I came straight from uni at 5.30 and I'm number 20 in the queue. But I'd already pre-ordered, just to make sure."

What's the game you want to get?

Jason: "I want to get *MotorStorm*, and Virgin are giving away *Resistance: Fall Of Man* for free. They sound like the two best games."

And I notice you've come prepared with two little fishing chairs...

Leila: "No, Virgin gave them to us!"

Jason: "Yeah, they've given us food, drink – they've been very hospitable."

Ricky, Paddington

You came for the PS3. How does it feel to be going home with a high definition TV as well?

"Very surprising! I was going to buy one, so I've saved myself £2000."

What game did you get?

"*Resistance: Fall Of Man.*"

Dijaz, Pakistan

So what's just happened?

"I've just won a PlayStation 3! It's unbelievable. I was just chatting to one of my friends and they shouted out my number, 35. And 35 is me! I was going to buy one anyway, but now I think I might spend the £400 on games, and maybe some good movies as well.

What games do you want to buy?

"*Call Of Duty 3*, then *Virtua Fighter 5* is my second choice. And I'll get some films, like Kingdom Of Heaven or Gone In 60 Seconds as well."

Ace, East London

How long have you been standing in this queue?

"Since 7 o'clock this evening. I saw the guy queuing since yesterday in the paper – good luck to him!"

Have you made any sacrifices to afford PS3?

"No, not really. I'm pretty well off. But I've taken a day off work tomorrow, saying I'm sick, so hopefully no one will spot me on TV!"

Data UK console launch sales compared

Here's how other consoles' launch weekends went. Sony claim a probable 185,000+ from 220,000 available units. Can that be true?

(Sony claim that pre-orders alone make PS3 the best selling launch)

ON THE DISC
See all these games on future discs

The Opinionator

"Cack handed? Home lets you *buy* instant glory..."

Gone are the days when a gamer's skill was measured by their initials on the high score screen. Your worth will now be measured by what kind of T-shirt you're wearing and how many trophies you have at your house. We are, of course, talking about PlayStation *Home*, and the PS network. Sure, we're excited about being able to deck out a virtual flat with gadgets, trophies and stuff imported from our hard drives, but the fact that some of these items have been labelled 'premium content' by Phil Harrison at GDC suggests that the people with the best suits, haircuts and sofas in *Home* won't have *earned* them – they'll have bought them with mum's credit card.

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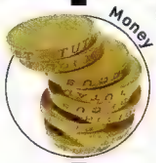

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Wage slaves

So while some guy slaves tirelessly away in *Resistance* to get 100 headshots in an online deathmatch to earn a Chimera head trophy, some over-privileged little oik is buying it directly – or indirectly via a premium content 'cheat' weapon, from the store for £6 to go with his new *Ratchet And Clank* futon. It is, and forgive us for sounding like George Galloway, as if a class society is developing within *Home* before it starts. So if you're a fumbling, useless dimwit who can barely walk in a straight line, you can still make your mark on the PS Network, sporting the finest in dandy attire and filling your crib with rare items.

Have it all

The real life equivalent would be saving up for six months for a new computer while your foppish, parent-dependent housemate was given one by his dad, for nothing. Whatever happened to achievement? Personal triumph? Skill? When *Home* goes live then prestige might only be a credit card transaction away – waving goodbye to gaming's democratic, open access soul. **Andy Kelly**

Myth-Buster

SEEN THIS?

There won't be any smut on the *Home* network.

THE TRUTH

Post GDC, Sony suggested there'd be no XXX content or swearing on *Home*, with stern censorship making the experience about as liberating as Camp X-Ray. But in a recent interview, Sony chief Phil Harrison didn't rule out the possibility of, say, showing Belgian Sweat flicks in your private space: "I think Home should be used for a much wider and more beneficial scope than that, but I think that people can express their creativity inside Home in a variety of ways and it's not necessarily for us to dictate what that should be". Upshot? What goes on in your Home apartment is your business, and Sony won't be snooping around your hard drive like a burglar. Whatever you do, don't accept a password-only invite to one of Milf's 'special' *Home* movies.

Thrill List

The latest news on PlayStation's hottest games, every issue

1 Heavenly Sword

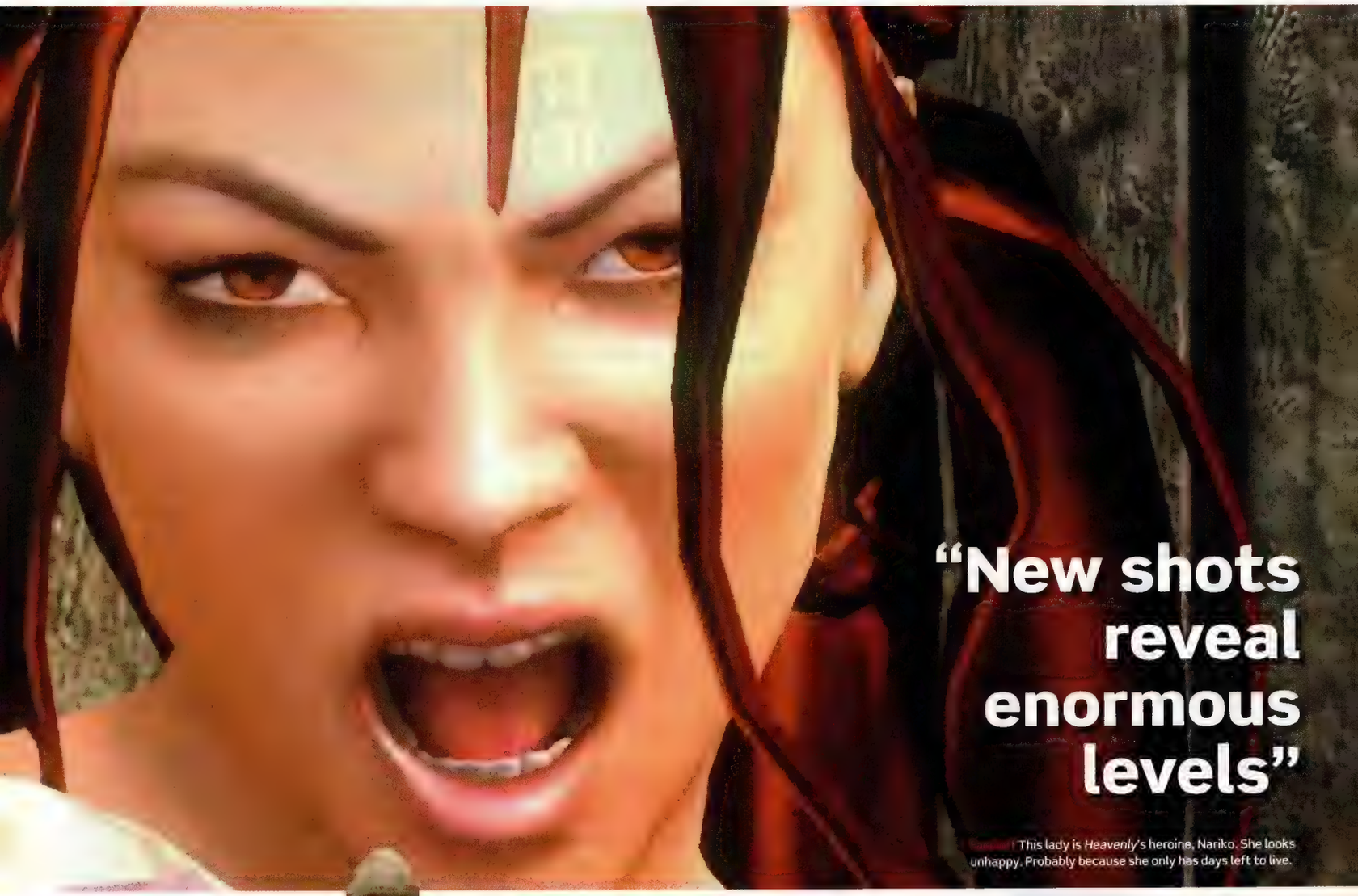
Redhead vs Gollum – fight!

This 'martial arts drama' by British developer Ninja Theory follows Nariko, the fiery redhead above, who only has a few days left to live. Rather than mope around, she uses her last days on Earth to fight against a king, played by Andy 'Gollum' Serkis, and his invading army. Epic. The game, nicknamed 'Goddess Of War' by smarmy bloggers, features real-time battles interspersed with rhythm action sections. OK, so maybe the nickname is justified after all. New shots reveal enormous levels, which is a relief after the E3 showing, which took place in a small, confined arena.

Pub Sony | **Dev** Ninja Theory | **ETA** July 2007

Familiarface *Heavenly*'s level design is rather similar to *Prince Of Persia*'s.

"It looks fun rather than unforgiving"
Warhawk page 15



"New shots reveal enormous levels"

This lady is *Heavenly*'s heroine, Nariko. She looks unhappy. Probably because she only has days left to live.

2 Battlefield: Bad Company
Destroy everything

While incredible fun online, playing *Battlefield* on your own has always been a hollow experience. But in *Bad Company*, Dice are focusing on creating a full-on single-player mode with a story and proper fleshed-out characters, renegade soldiers on a quest for fame, fortune and glory on the battlefield. The environments are massive and genuinely fully destructible. Not the odd wall or pre-defined building, but *everything* can be torn apart with gunfire and tank shells.

Pub EA | **Dev** Dice | **ETA Late** 2007

3 Colin McRae: DIRT
Get down and DIRTy

Colin was never quite a full-on sim, but now it's gone completely off the scale. "*DIRT* goes back to the days when men were men and rally cars were even crazier than they are now!" bellows the game's website. Codemasters are promising 45 cars, over 100 stables and nine styles of off-road racing including the perilous-sounding 'hill climb' and frantic rally-cross. The figures are impressive and it looks stunning.

Pub Codies | **Dev** Codies | **ETA** Late 2007

4 Saboteur
Time to die, monsieur

This puts you in the beret of a member of the French Resistance during WW2. Pandemic are claiming this is an 'original take' on the war, but *Medal Of Honor: Underground* on PSone had missions where you worked for la resistance. But it's better than being John Q. Yank blasting Nazis, and Pandemic are famed for their unique game design, so it should be good.

Dev Pandemic | **Pub** None yet | **ETA** 2008

Saboteur and *Colin McRae: DIRT*
The PS3 colours of choice seem to be brown and grey, judging by this.

5 Final Fantasy Anniversary
A legend in your hand

This PSP remake of the first ever *Final Fantasy* game comes with updated graphics, new dungeons and a huge monster database. There have been loads of remakes of the NES classic, but this looks like the best yet. They've also rewritten the slightly ropey story, although those 'updated' graphics we mentioined earlier are still distinctly retro – they've just moved from two-colour sprites to SNES-style ones. Still, it has a certain charm about it

Pub Square Enix | **Dev** Square Enix | **ETA** 2008

ON THE DISC
Heavenly Sword is on this month's disc

Why We Love...

Keita Takahashi

Making rolling balls more fun than it already was

What has he done?

Takahashi was an artist and a sculptor, but became a game designer in 2004, heading the design team for Namco's rolly-ball classic *Katamari Damacy*. In 2005 he worked on *Damacy*'s sequel, titled *We Love Katamari and PSP's Me And My Katamari*.

Why we like him?

Because he's incredibly protective of his work. For example, rather than let Namco release official *Katamari* t-shirts, Takahashi worked with fashion label Panic Inc. and created his own line of designs. He said that when pitching *Katamari* to Namco, if the board members didn't 'get' an idea then that meant he would go with it. He's unorthodox and unpredictable, and that's why he's one of the most exciting figures in the games industry.

What's he doing now?

The good news is, he's working on a mystery PS3 game. He said "It probably won't sell as much as *Katamari*." Well, considering *Katamari* sold about ten copies this doesn't exactly bode well for his new project. He's also pursuing non-gaming projects including a table that turns into a robot. Yes. There will be a new PS3 *Katamari*, titled *Beautiful Katamari*, but Takahashi will have no involvement. Booo.

Who are you?
Name Keita Takanashi **Age** ?
Role Designer
Key Games *Katamari Damacy, We Love Katamari, Me And My Katamari*

The Insider

He's the man who knows too much...

Sony chief **Phil Harrison** has revealed a new PS3 firmware update that comes with a bundle of new features and upgrades. These include being able to change the background colour of menus and apply wallpaper from images on your hard drive, the addition of the Sony Connect store, which lets you download music and movies, enhanced network security, PlayStation Lifestyle, which is sort of like YouTube and MySpace combined, with loads of new trailers and demos. Brilliant.

Some new **PlayStation Home** facts have emerged. Apparently avatars won't be able to touch/collide with each other, but according to Phil you can "surf down the stairs on a sofa". There will also be moderators wandering around in *Home* to make sure nobody's 'grooming' small children or anything like that,

"In *Home*, you can 'surf down the stairs on a sofa'"

and there's a rumour floating around that your *Home* avatar will be used in future PS3 games, just like the 'Miis' in Nintendo's *Wii Sports*. They also want to release an HD camera and microphone for PS3 in late 2007, probably for use in *Home* once more. Other Sony news – **God Of War 3** is now officially confirmed and in development, plus will support rumble. That means Sony are probably working on a new version of the Sixaxis as we speak with added vibration. Oh, and it'll run in 1080p, but that's hardly a novelty these days.

Rumours have been quashed that **Final Fantasy XIII** would use the **Unreal Tournament 3** engine. Apparently Square are using their own, the White engine. Speaking of *Unreal 3*, the PS3 version will have USB mouse and keyboard support so gamers can get the same experience as they would playing it on a PC. The game will also use Sixaxis, which you can use to look around. Film fans rejoice – legendary director Steven Spielberg is helping to develop two PS3 games that will focus, like his film AI, on the relationships between humans and artificial intelligence. One will be just like his films according to EA's vice president Neil Young, but the other will be totally unexpected. Hmm.

In other news, Warren Spector, the bloke behind **Deus Ex**, is working on two new games, one a Hollywood collaboration and the other based on a world he created with his fantasy writer wife. Spector wants to 'shake up' the games industry and would rather 'fail miserably' than create another driving or sports game. Good man, Wazza.

Capcom have announced **Monster Hunter 3** and revealed that, like the previous games in the series, it'll be primarily online-focused. No surprises there, then. Thanks to Cell chip makers IBM, a PlayStation 3 price drop may be imminent. They're producing a new type of chip that will be put into newer models of PS3 to reduce its production costs. Finally, ace PS3 racer **MotorStorm** is getting a new time trial mode via an online update with global rankings, which should be exciting.

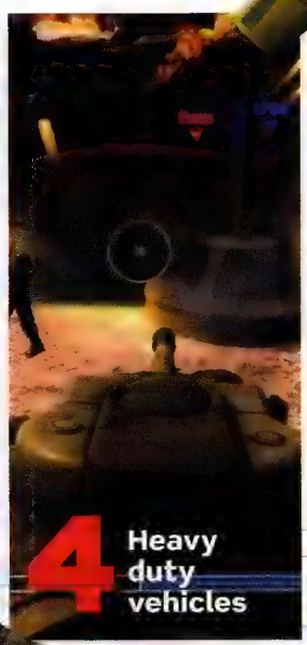
Lightning bolt So FFXIII won't be using the Unreal 3 engine, but Square *have* licensed it... hmmm.

"MGS2 doesn't work on PlayStation 3"
Backwards compatibility page 17

PS3 REPORT

Go online with Warhawk and fight 31 other men in tanks

Five reasons to love Sony's online-only multi-player war



Watching *Warhawk* producer Dylan Jobe wobbling a plane about with the Sixaxis at E3 was impressive – well, sort of – but, in all honesty, we'd prefer not to. Luckily, motion-sensing can be toggled off allowing you to take to the skies using the analogue sticks like a normal person. In planes you can go on bombing runs and engage in **mid-air dogfights** (1) with airborne opponents. But if the skies are packed, **take to the battlefield on foot** (2). The animation reminds us of *TimeSplitters* – sort of bendy and cartoony. It looks fun, rather than the unforgiving war first-person shooters we're used to dying in. Naturally, teamwork is the order of the day. You can **work co-operatively with others** (3) to either beat the opposing team or capture enemy positions on the map. For example, one of you can drive around in a jeep while your squadmate fires at enemy infantry as you speed past them. But there are **heavy duty vehicles** (4) at your disposal too, so if you fancy going solo in a big bastard armoured tank then you can. **The levels are huge** (5) and there are loads of places to hide. You really have to work together to flank and flush out entrenched foes, which makes the game as much of a tactical experience as an action one. More soon.

Pub Sony | **Dev** Incognito | **ETA** Late 2007

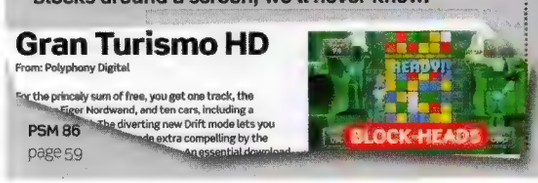
The PSM3 Wrong-Righter

EMAIL PSM3 @
Spotted some Bertie Bollax in PSM3? Tell us:
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Rubbing the wax-hot polish of truth over past issues

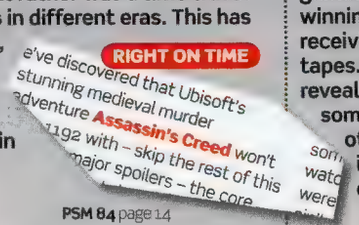
GT:HD – NOT GT:HD ☒ WRONG

Last month on page 59 we ran a short story about *Gran Turismo HD*. The screenshot next to it, however, wasn't *Gran Turismo HD*. It was *Go! Puzzle*, reviewed on the same page. How we confused a game about driving cars around the Alps with a game about driving colour blocks around a screen, we'll never know.


Gran Turismo HD
From: Polyphony Digital
For the princely sum of free, you get one track, the
Eiger Nordwand, and ten cars, including a
The diverting new Drift mode lets you
de extra compelling by the
An essential download
PSM 86
page 59
BERDOT
BLOCK-HEADS

ASSASSIN'S – TIME TRAVEL ☑ RIGHT

In issue 84, on page 14, we said that *Assasin's Creed*, Ubisoft's new adventure game, wasn't set solely in the 1100s, but rather was a time travel game featuring levels in different eras. This has since been confirmed, adding yet another notch of right to our collective bedpost. Not that we all sleep in the same bed. Not usually, anyway.


RIGHT ON TIME
e've discovered that Ubisoft's
stunning medieval murder
adventure Assassin's Creed won't
1192 with – skip the rest of this
major spoilers – the core
PSM 84 page 14

TOP 10 GAMES... AND A PC ONE ☒ WRONG

For the past few months we've run an image of the top 10 PS2 games that our lucky challenge-winning readers would be receiving in exchange for their tapes. But closer inspection reveals that, nestled under some Platinum game or other, *Half-Life 2* on PC is poking out. Oh dear. Oops.

PSM 85 page 42

ON THE DISC
When there's a new PES, it'll be on a disc

PS2 REPORT

Could you be the next UK PES6 champion?

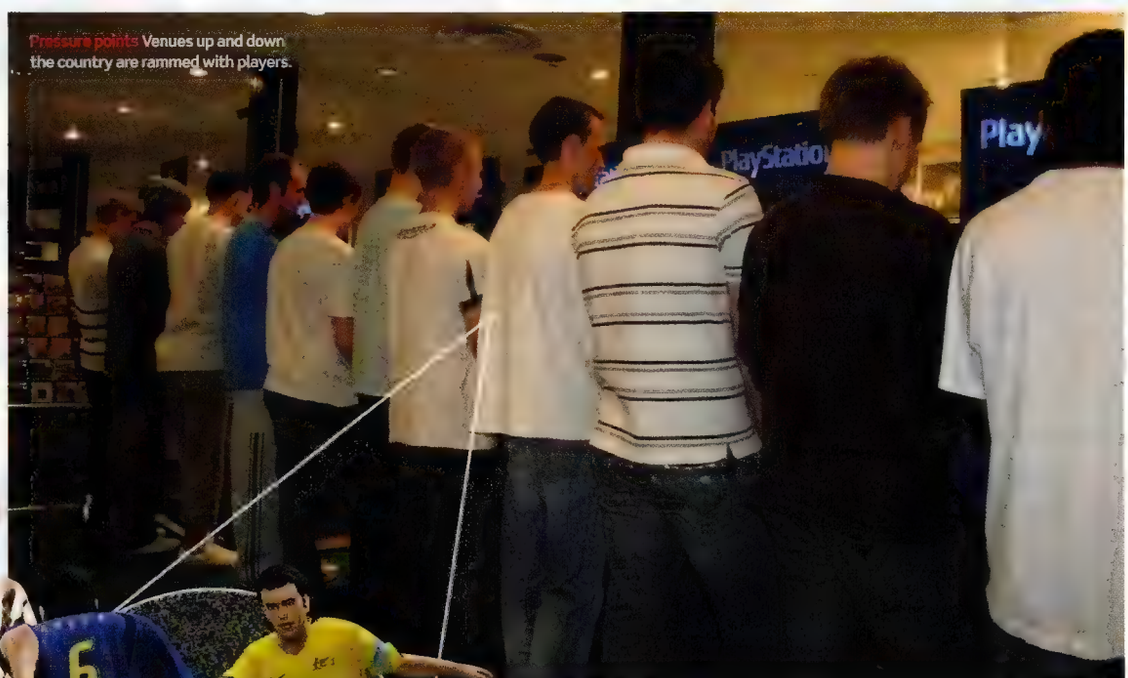
Register today and show the rest of the UK and Ireland that you're the best...

After the huge success of 2006's *PES* Rankings competition, the tournament is back, bigger and better than ever. There are already 32,425 players signed up at www.pesrankings.com and the number is growing every day, but this doesn't mean you've missed your opportunity to become the number one player in the UK and Ireland. This season has seen a dramatic increase in the number of events, tournaments and cup competitions that you can compete in.

How can I take part?

So if you've got the time and the drive you can still enter events, make it into top 32 players and qualify for the Grand Final – keep an eye on the *PES* Rankings website to check when and where the events will be. The winner and runner-up will then go on to represent the UK and Ireland in the European Finals, which this year is rumoured to be held in the beautiful city of Barcelona. Not bad a bad prize for just playing your favourite footie game, eh?

Also new for 2007 is the ability to enter *PES* Rankings even if you've only got the PSP version. This means you can rack up points while you're on the move so long as your Wi-Fi opponent is registered too, although it's worth pointing out at this stage that the Grand Finals will most likely be played on PS2. Officially sponsored tournaments will be hosted over the course of the year. It's worth turning up to these events because there'll be goodie bags for the day's best players and you might even get to meet a legendary footballer like Pele, as some lucky participants did last year. Plus if you're lucky enough to get a place in the all-expenses paid, European Finals, you'll get the chance to meet the genius behind PES, Seabass. And PSM3 will be there to cheer you all the way to victory. Think you're up to the challenge? Then get registered.


Pressure points Venues up and down the country are rammed with players.

Win Free stuff

We're making a PSM3 league via *PES* Rankings and we want YOU in it!

That's right, from next month onwards we're going to be launching our very own *PES6* league for you loyal readers. We'll be giving prizes away to the month's top performers, ranging from a free subscription to PSM3 to the latest and greatest games on PSP, PS2 and PS3. Good eh?

Unfortunately, for any of you thinking it will be an easy ride, our resident *PES* Galacticos will be there to take on all-comers. They never lose, y'know. Well, sometimes they do, but even then they always claim a shady 'moral' victory. We'll feature the top players in the magazine and there'll be a continual league for all to see on ww.pesrankings.com. Check back next month for full details on how to register.

Explained What is PES Rankings?

Let us explain how the PES Rankings system works...

PES Rankings is nationwide league that's played on *PES6*. It's where the best *PES* players gather to prove that they're the undisputed champion. You can register for the system by going to www.pesrankings.com and filling in a few personal details, and you're away. You can then enter any of the tournaments that are featured on the site, and there are always online and offline competitions going on. As long as you're playing a registered opponent you can earn points to climb the table. You can even earn points by playing your mates at home. Some events offer bigger point hauls so it's worth turning up. The top 32 will play in the Grand Final and the winner and runner-up will represent the UK and Ireland in the Euro Finals.

PS3 SPEAK OUT

The truth about backwards compatibility

So what PS2 games can you play on your PS3 then?

You might have heard that UK PS3s come without an Emotion Engine chip – unlike the US/Japanese models – meaning that not all PS2 games are backwards compatible. But it's not all bad. OK, it's quite bad, but it could have been worse. The official website (http://faq.eu.playstation.com/bc/) tells you which games play, which games play with 'minor issues' and which ones come with 'noticeable issues'. So while the likes of bum-fest *Fantastic 4* work perfectly, classics like *Dragon Quest* don't. It even gives you the sage advice to 'skip optional FMV sequences'... What? We can't make compromises like that, especially for epic story-led games like *Final Fantasy*.

Don't despair – Phil Harrison has confirmed that future firmware updates will make more games backwards compatible, perhaps even with 720p or higher 'upscaled' HD visuals. So while *Resi 4* plays with 'noticeable issues' now, in the future it'll run as smooth as it did on PS2. Our bet? Everyone will forget about PS2 games entirely when PS3 takes off.

***Okami* – Noticeable issues**
Boo! One of PS2's flagship technical marvels doesn't run properly on PS3.

***Killzone* – Noticeable issues**
With *Killzone* PS3 on the horizon, having *Killzone* PS2 on the 'noticeable issues' bit is very silly.

***Guitar Hero 2* – Doesn't work**
Not that it'd be playable anyway, seeing as you can't connect your guitar to PS3...

***Soul Calibur 2* – Doesn't work**
Another fave. We hope this, and the others we're sad don't work, are fixed with updates.

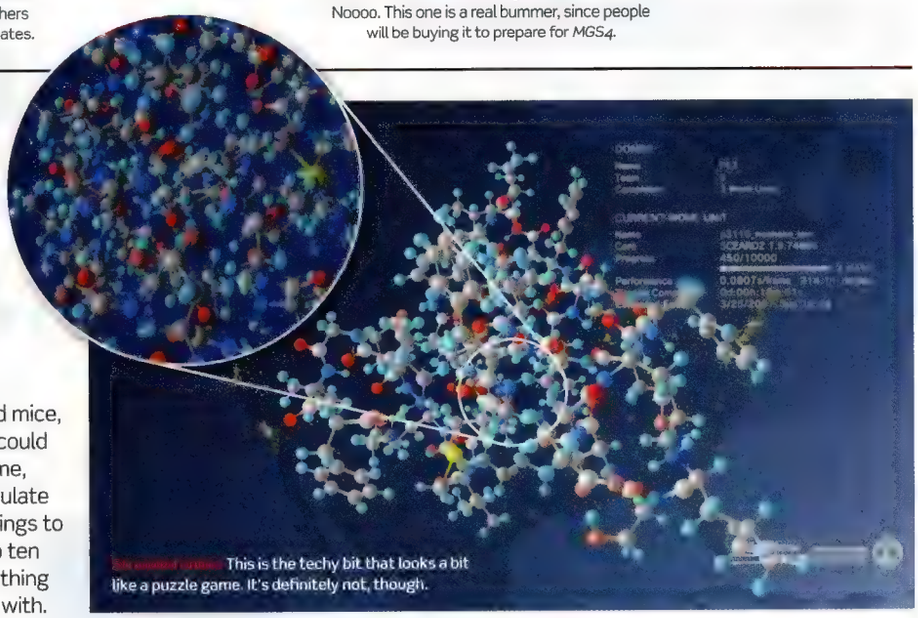
***MGS2: Sons Of Liberty* – Doesn't work**
Noooo. This one is a real bummer, since people will be buying it to prepare for *MGS4*.

PS3 HEALTH

Help heal the world with PS3

It's not that difficult. Honest.

PS3's firmware update 1.60 supports Bluetooth keyboards and mice, background downloading and, surprisingly, a program which could help rid the world of cancer and other diseases. Folding@home, from Stanford University, is designed to use the world's PS3s to simulate scientific research when they're idle. They'll then feed back key findings to a central computer when on the net. PS3 is able to process this info ten times faster than your average PC, thus finding cures quickly. Something to tell your parents about when you ask for that £425 to buy a PS3 with.



This is the techy bit that looks a bit like a puzzle game. It's definitely not, though.

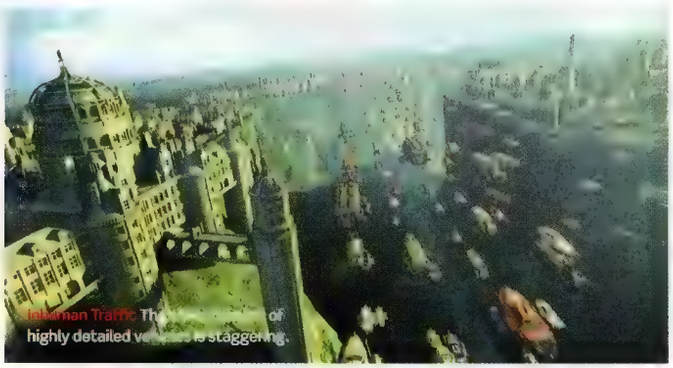
ON THE DISC
GTAIV will be on the disc ASAP

PS3 FOLDS

Why all PS3 games will look this good

New graphics software unlocks PS3's power for all developers

Japanese software wizards CRI Middleware showcased their new graphics software for PS3 at the recent Games Developers Conference – see page 80 for a full GDC report – and, as this screenshot proves, it makes games look incredible. CRI's short demo of floating vehicles is packed with detail, from crisp waterfalls roaring in the valley below to the ornate buildings in the foreground. The good news? These powerful tools will be available for any PS3 developer, reminiscent of the way that Criterion's RenderWare software sparked PS2's graphics into life back in 2001, resulting in classic games such as *Pro Evolution Soccer 2*, *Burnout* and *Grand Theft Auto 3*. Don't be fooled by the so-so launch games – PS3 is only getting started.

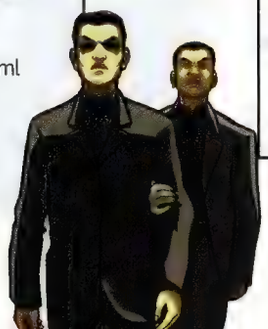


PSP BEATS

Turn your PSP into a mobile disco

Rockstar make sweet music

Go to http://beaterator.rockstargames.com/beaterator.html and you'll find Rockstar's hidden gem of a music program, *Beaterator* – and there's a PSP version earmarked for release in summer 2007. *Beaterator* is a comprehensive mixing desk and Rockstar have even hooked up with top hip-hop producer, Timbaland, who's creating some new beats for it. Wick.



PS3 REPORT

What next for GTA IV?

When and how Rockstar will release info on their new epic

Yes, it's testament to the importance of *GTA*, that even the way Rockstar drip-feed information and images of a new game is worthy of inspection. By releasing a single screen, website or logo, they get the internet, gamers and magazines speculating madly, thus hyping the game without having to spend loads of money on marketing. Here's a timeline of how assets were released for *GTA: San Andreas* in 2004, and what this might mean for *GTAIV* this year... Note how the logos of both games were released in early March, but the *GTAIV* trailer's curiously ahead of schedule...

Explosion
Fever pitch
Wow
Stunning
Pleasing
Exciting
Teasing
Curious
GTAIV – March 29 2007
Rockstar release the first trailer (unavailable as we go to press).
GTAIV – Logo March 1 2007
The logo is revealed. Well, part of it. A metallic 'IV'.
May 13 2004 – First screenshots released
And we were right – three screenshots released on Rockstar's website show an orange-tinted LA street scene with the game's new hero, CJ, clutching an uzi.
IV
grand theft auto San Andreas
March 1, 2004 – GTA: SA Logo
Rockstar give a tentative release date of October 22 and reveal the game's logo. We guess from the font it'll be hip-hop themed.
MARCH
APRIL

GTAIV – Oct 19 2007
The UK release date for *GTAIV*, confirmed over a year ago.

October 29 2004 – GTA: SA ships
San Andreas is finally released. It sells millions. We give it our best score ever. Brilliant.

GTAIV – August 2007
We're expecting the second 'big reveal' about now – albeit a 'hidden' feature like online play.

October 25 2004 – Voice actors revealed
Featuring Ice-T, and Samuel L Jackson as the evil Tenpenny.

GTAIV – September 2007
Expect a revised, and amazing, gameplay trailer about this time.

August 26 2004 – San Fierro revealed
San Francisco tribute city San Fierro exposed exclusively in PSM2.

September 25 2004 – Guns N Roses trailer
That 'Welcome To The Jungle' TV ad airs for the first time, showing all three cities from a chopper, and introducing CJ to the world.

GTAIV – May 2007
Rockstar will reveal the first screens in early May worldwide. Fact.

August 23 2004 – Trailer released
Rockstar release a 'mood' trailer that shows a shot of a plane soaring across the Vinewood sign and bits from assorted cut-scenes.

GTAIV – June 2007
Expect some net-only screens about now, but no major new information.

September 3 2004 – Soundtrack details revealed
Rockstar announce that they're working with Interscope Records, and that the soundtrack will consist of early '90s hip-hop, rock, grunge and more.

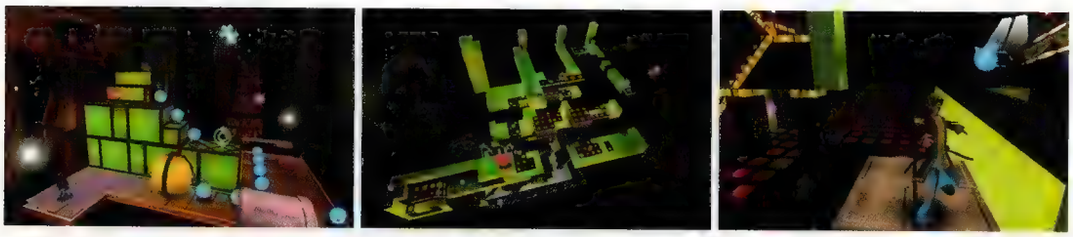
July 30 2004 – Fansite screens released
Rockstar, showing that they care just as much for 'the people' as they do the press, release nine exclusive screenshots to *GTA* fansites.

MAY | JUNE | JULY | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER

ON THE DISC
Crush is on the disc this month

The last minute shots of big importance

The freshest pics, squeezed in as we go to press



PSP Crush It's time to find your marbles

Details Pub Sega | **Dev** Kuju | **Genre** Puzzle

Lowdown Meet Dan, a bloke who's got so many unresolved problems in his life that he's developed insomnia. His last resort to try and get a decent night's sleep is to try hypnosis. The result is Crush, a clever platformer where you can literally crush the environment from 2D to 3D and back again. You have to gather your marbles – literally – while dodging monsters and gaps. It's the most original and bizarre game we've played in ages, and we'll have the review next issue.

ETA May

PS2 Legend Of The Dragon The anime war rages on

Details Pub Game Factory | **Dev** In-house | **Genre** Beat-'em-up

Lowdown Following on from the successes of *Dragon Ball Z* and *Yu-Gi-Oh!* comes another cartoon scrapper, Legend of the Dragon. This stylish beat 'em-up sees you fighting to be crowned Golden Dragon and set up a battle with the evil Zodiac Master, Woo Yin. The hook here is that each character has four special attacks that can be activated easily through a touch of the D-pad. So much easier than *Dragon Ball Z*'s confusing combos, then. Review next month.

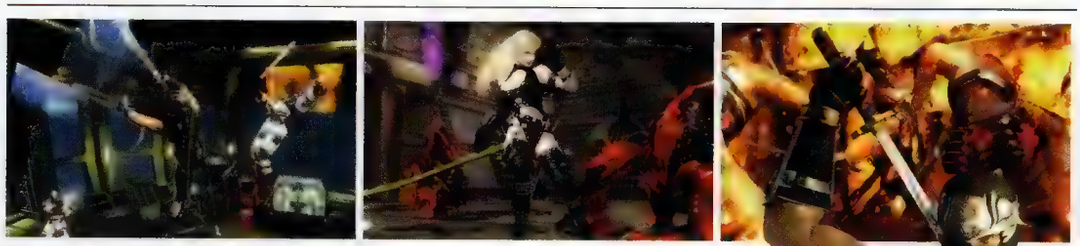
ETA May

PS3 Hei$t Out on the rob with Codie$ new crime-$im.

Details Pub Codemasters | **Dev** InXile Entertainment | **Genre** Driving/action

Lowdown Bu$ting out later in 2007, it'$ Hei$t. $et in $an Franci$co – no, we'll stop this now – during the 1969 summer of love, the story follows Johnny Sutton, a man just out of prison but clearly not reformed, as he slips back into his life of dodgy dealings. It all sounds a lot like *GTA*, what with robbing banks and out-driving the police during high-speed pursuits, but the idea of carefully planning your next big job alongside your wise-cracking AI buddies sounds fun.

ETA Winter



PS3 Ninja Gaiden Sigma Hard like iron ninjas

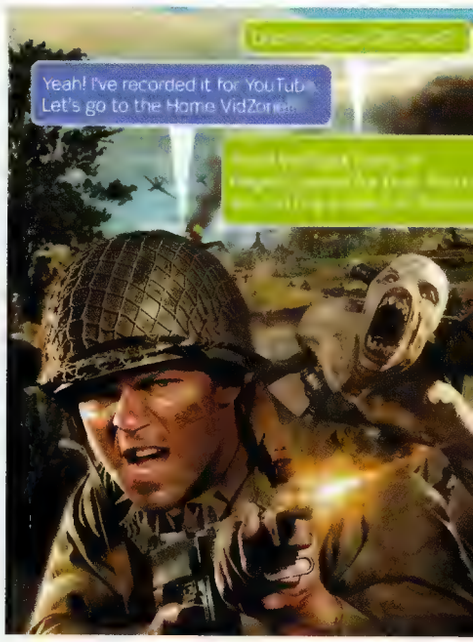
Details Pub TBA | **Dev** Tecmo | **Genre** Action

Lowdown They might not have a publisher yet, but Tecmo have already stoked up interest in *Ninja Gaiden Sigma*. The Xbox version was among the most difficult games of all time, and this refined PS3 version comes with new stages, weapons (including duel-wield swords) and a new playable character called Rachel. Let's hope a publisher snaps it up soon.

ETA TBA

The Optimist

Don't worry. Be happy



No new ideas? Awesome!

I've just read about that new PS3 shooter *Turning Point* and I just *love* how it steals a load of safe ideas from other games. I can't get enough of war. The bleakness, jarring images of men screaming because their friends have just burned to death in a tank, Saving Private Ryan-inspired set-pieces... brilliant! Why bother thinking up new ideas at all? Like *Okami*. WTF? Who wants to be a rubbishy wolf running about painting on stuff? You know where you are with a war game. Up to your knees in mud firing blindly at Nazi-shaped blobs in the rain. That's what games are meant to be like, not rolling things up in a ball or stabbing big furry men in the head. And it should all be linked to *Home* so we can spend loads of cash on wick new helmets with the Sony logo on them.

Always the same

Games should just be amalgamations of things everyone likes. All first-person shooters should be about wars or alternate futures or private military companies or genetic experiments 'gone wrong'. Sports games shouldn't innovate – they should be glorified roster updates. We shouldn't be able to discern between genres at all – it's just too complex. If everything's the same, we don't have to worry about what's 'good' and 'bad'. Much simpler!

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Are too many games the same? Email psm3@futurenet.co.uk

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Cover Game

PS3

ON THE DISC

BETTER THAN THE DEVIL YOU KNOW?

Cover Game

Two heroes. One epic playtest. Why DMC on PS3 is the best yet.

The last time we saw Dante he was a cocky teenager wearing an absurd leather nipple strap. Now he's approaching 40, covered in stubble and a right evil bastard. "Dante's getting too powerful," DMC4 producer Hiroyuki Kobayashi told us. "Making him the main character would take all the challenge out of the game." Which explains the presence of Nero, the game's new protagonist. He's got a serious beef with Dante after he spotted the red-coated swine killing one of his mates, a knight from an outfit known as the Order of the Sword, of which he's a member.

No arm done

But of course, Dante's not that much of a rogue and there's obviously some underlying reason for him topping this lad, which will no doubt become the game's main mystery. But the good news is, it's not all about Nero – we can now confirm that Dante is totally playable, with his own missions and fighting style. More on that later, but just know that he's as much of a pleasure to control as he's always been, if not more so. But we have to admit that Nero is <gasp> better than Dante. Mainly because of his Devilbringer arm, which adds an extra dimension to the fighting. Not only are you mashing monsters up with a sword and pistol, but you're

spinning them around your head with a ghostly demon arm.

The gameplay is classic *DMC* – bar Nero's previously unseen Red Queen 'Accelerator' sword attacks (see page 28). The main difference is how incredibly vivid it looks in 1080p. In one new playable scene, you use the Devilbringer (also on page 28) to sail across huge crowds of puppet monsters who are laying siege to a sleepy seaside town – with *thousands* of them writhing below you. It's the kind of thing you'd never see on PS2, due to its obvious technical inferiority. Other next-gen touches include reflections, hazy sunlight, rippling, reflective water and incredible character models. It looks a peach and it's only when you compare it with *DMC3* that you realize just how much raw graphical power PS3 really packs.

Blast from the past

"*Devil May Cry 4* is a mixture of the best bits of *DMC1* and *DMC3: Special Edition*," director Hideaki Itsuno reveals. "In terms of difficulty it's nearer to *DMC3 SE*." So that means a challenge, but – hopefully – an accessible one that series' newcomers can handle. From what we played, though, it seemed just as hard as the original *DMC3*, rewarding patience and perseverance. But it's probably the best *Devil May Cry* game yet, with gameplay as polished, solid and responsive, it shames games like *Genji: Days Of The Blade*. Familiar elements like the fixed camera angles and clear-enemies-to-proceed level structure feel a bit 'last generation', but this is far from a bet-hedging re-hash.

We played two levels – a sun-bleached seaside town inspired by European medieval architecture ("We want you to feel like death," reveals Itsuno-san) and a snowy mountain that appeared behind Dante in the E3 2005 trailer. The contrast between the two is stark with level-specific enemies – like The Frost down there – and unique puzzles. We also got to scrap fiery boss Berias (page 26). *DMC4* is going to be amazing. Read on to discover why we've fallen for Nero, and how the combat's undergone a major shake up – including Nero's Accelerator sword attacks. Mechanical blades? Let's rock...

Steam punk You quickly develop a knack for revving your sword. So much so that you'll find yourself doing it without even realizing. It's brilliantly intuitive.

White devil Use your demon arm to smash the Frost to bits.

The Frost

New enemies the Frost attack Nero in packs in this winter level, complete with enormous gothic cathedral and vast snow-capped mountains. They can recharge their health by freezing themselves, so the battle can be hard-fought if you drag your heels – follow the sequence to your right. It's all about timing, pace and revving up Nero's sword (using the Accelerator technique) until it's spewing flames and steam.

"Use your demon arm to smash them to bits"

Is Nero Vergil from *DMC3*?

Maybe. And here's the compelling evidence...

With his white hair and cocky one-liners Nero has to be a son of Sparda, right? Specifically, Vergil, Dante's bothersome brother from *DMC3*. First of all; his taunts. Nero's put-downs are identical to Vergil's ("Scum!"), as is the action where he slides his thumb across his neck as a way of telling enemies that he's about to slice them up. More evidence: in *DMC3* Dante and Vergil were young. Vergil challenged Mundus (the evil demon who Sparda defeated 2000 years ago, but returned in *DMC3* to kill Dante) and lost, becoming the mind-wiped Nero Angelo. Now, the popular theory based on this is that the moment Mundus defeated Vergil, he became a 'full' demon and his humanity was cast away. The Order of the Sword discover the orphaned child and raise him. As for the Devilbringer – when Dante beat Nero Angelo, the demon part of Vergil tried to return to its original host, but could only attach itself as the demon arm. See, it all makes perfect sense.

Ice storm When they freeze over their health pretty much fills up entirely, so shatter them as quickly as you can.

Zero to Nero We've placed Nero's hair (circled) onto Vergil from *DMC3*'s body... spooky, no?

Health conscious If you're low on health, destroy these pillars and green orbs will spew out.

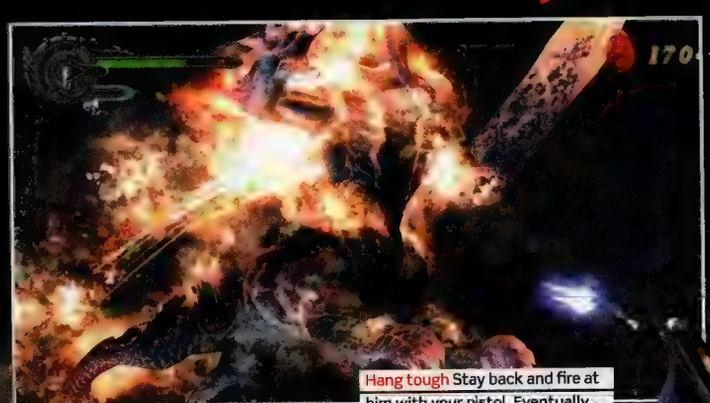
“This is Berias. He’s covered in flame and very, very angry indeed”

Devil May Cry 4

"The amount of detail, and the lighting, is stunning"

Jump around Use a double jump to reach Berias' head. Slash at his face to reduce his health bar.

Rage gauge When he gets angry, he sends Nero flying backwards with a deafening roar.



Hang tough Stay back and fire at him with your pistol. Eventually the flames will start to diminish.

Snuff box When the flames go out he's vulnerable to attacks from Nero's Devilbringer.

Fighting Berias

This fiery demon is Berias. He's covered in flame and very, very angry, but that doesn't stop Nero from making a bad joke about how he 'doesn't tan' and calling him out for a fight. It's a fairly traditional *DMC*-style boss battle, although the arena is much more open, and full of sheds that shatter into splinters whenever Berias stamps on them. The amount of detail in Berias' character model, and the lighting and shadows cast from the flames surrounding him, are stunning.

Beat down In true *DMC* style he takes quite a beating. It's about perseverance as much as skill.

Mercury rev Keep revving up your sword to do extra damage. Stick at it and he'll soon fall.

NERO

Grim Grip

This lets Nero stretch out his arm like the bendy one out of the Fantastic Four. You can use this to chuck enemies around, but its main use is reaching distant objects like this red orb here. You use these to upgrade Nero.

Flyover

While Dante is stuck to the ground – excluding the cut-scenes where he regularly darts up the sides of buildings – Nero can use the Grim Grip to pull himself across cavernous gaps. You can only do this at set points, mind. Look for blue markers.

Devilbringer

Not only does this continue the fine Capcom tradition of 'arms that do odd stuff (*God Hand*, *Onimusha*), but happens to be one of the most interesting things in the game. It gives Nero an extra edge over Dante in combat.

The Red Queen

Nero's sword is better than Dante's because it has a motorcycle rev in the handle. If you press ⓡ in time with your attacks he revs until it glows red, which unleashes nasty flame attacks that get steadily more damaging, so long as you keep your rhythm.

Does Nero have what it

This fresh-faced pansy is actually harder than a thousand nails. Not only can he whip up a storm with his sword and pistols, the Red Queen and the Blue Rose, but he has a gauntlet lashed to his arm called the Devilbringer that lets him lift impossibly heavy objects, hurl enemies about and drag himself across wide gaps.

DANTE

takes to steal Dante's crown?

With a chin like a stone monolith and the ability to transform into a demon, Dante is the toughest half-man in the world. In *DMC4* he takes a back seat, but is still as cocksure and arrogant as ever, regularly getting into scraps with new fish Nero. He's so grizzled and stubbly these days it's like he's turning into a fleshy cactus.

Force Edge

Dante's *DMC3* fighting styles – gunslinger, swordmaster, royal guard, trickster and so on – can all be switched between in real-time by pressing the D-pad in the corresponding direction. You can even do this mid-combo in exchange for loads of delicious style points.

Ebony & Ivory

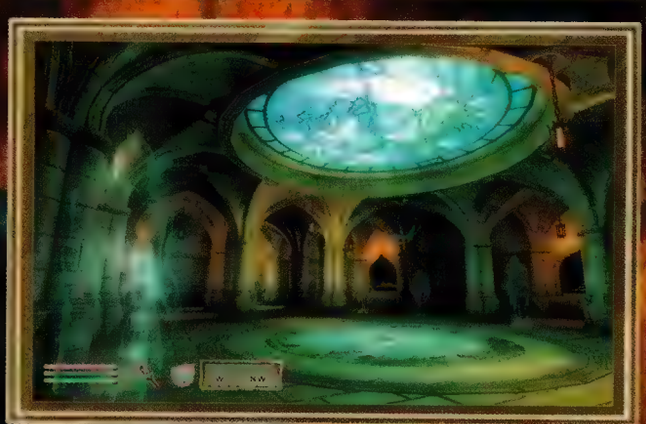
Dante's faithful monochrome sidearms Ebony and Ivory return, and as ever they come with unlimited ammo. They also have a supernatural fire rate which lets you juggle enemies. But other than that they're unchanged.

High Roller

To keep combos going, you have to hike enemies up into the air. This'll be familiar to *DMC* veterans and you can juggle a foe about by rapidly firing your pistols. Essential for flashy combos.

Riding Shotgun

If you've had your fill of Ebony and Ivory then ditch them both for something meatier, like this sawn-off shotgun. If you equip it and use the Gunslinger fighting style, then Dante will perform an amazing flurry of death, using them like fiery nunchucks.



THE 2006 GAME OF THE YEAR COMES TO PLAYSTATION®3

OUT 27TH APRIL

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OPSM3

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PLAYSTATION 3

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UBISOFT

The RPG for the Next Generation

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PS2

Pub Rockstar | **Dev** Rockstar London
Players 1 | **Genre** Stealth
FYI The sequel to the most controversial game ever

ON THE DISC
Manhunt 2 will be on a disc very soon

Manhunt 2

The hunt for Daniel Lamb's sanity begins here

Nathan Irvine

QUOTE

Developer insight

Since the day development was completed on the original *Manhunt*, Rockstar have been working on this sequel, with newly formed studio Rockstar London taking the reins from original developers Rockstar North. Headed up by Mark Washbrook, the team decided early on that Cash's journey was over. "At the end of the first game there's a real sense of closure", explains Mark, "With *Manhunt 2* we want to explore new areas while retaining the mood of the original and, most importantly, create a game where it isn't necessary to have played the *Manhunt* to enjoy this one".

Mark Washbrook
Studio Manager, Rockstar London

There are still loads of brutal executions, right?

Of course, and as before there are three levels of brutality. There's the quick kill where Daniel will plug someone's neck with a pen, or he can dole out a bit of a beating first... or furiously mash them up and puncture their chest with a flurry of biro stabs. It's very gory in places, as you'd expect.

So who's this Daniel Lamb chap?

Former scientist – and current psychopath – Daniel Lamb put his body on the line for some weapon-based research at the shady Pickman Corporation. He awakes to find himself in Dixmor Hospital for the insane. Suffering from amnesia and haunted by horrific flashbacks, he goes in search of the only people he can remember in the hope of piecing together the events that landed him in the slammer. He's a reluctant killer, goaded on by his mysterious inmate chum, Leo, who convinces him that beating a man into paste is much better than talking it out. Although savage murders are followed by bouts of remorse, it's the only way he's going to get real answers...

Is it less violent than before?
Quite the opposite. Graphic murders have been ramped up and blood flows like a river. Gun kills involve more headshots than your average photo-booth and sliced faces end up like Swiss cheese.

So what new features are there in the sequel?
The narrow corridors add a more claustrophobic feel, but *Manhunt 2* has a few new tricks besides that. Environmental kills are marked with an ⊗ on the radar and can be used as an alternative to the standard methods. For example, line up a foe and Daniel can grab a nearby telephone cord, wrap it around their neck and drag them to the floor until they stop moving. You can also perform gun executions. Sneak up on a bloke and he'll turn around to be met with two barrels-worth of shotgun pellets to the face. Ouch. You can also use noise to your advantage. During the brothel level, if you smash a window while a working woman is moaning the stalking guards won't hear it.

"Gun fights involve more head shots than a photo booth"

Do you still hide in the shadows?
Yep. Unlike last time, though, you can create your own darkness by smashing lights and dashing into cover. This can alert guards, mind. Also, there's a random bit when searching guards will stare into the shadows and button prompts will appear. Hit the right ones and you'll regulate your breathing and stay hidden – if not, you'll be spotted.

So who's the best: Cash or Daniel?
It's hard to choose at this stage. However, Daniel is more energetic than Cash as he can climb and crawl, and at least he has a conscience...

PSM3 Reckons
It's packed with the stuff that made the original so intense and exciting and, with the added polish, *Manhunt 2* appears set to grip you once again.

ETA MAY 2007

Pub Konami | **Dev** Digital Extremes
Players 1 (Multiplayer TBC) | **Genre** Shooter
FYI The first next-gen announced back in 2004

ON THE DISC
Dark Sector will appear on a forthcoming disc

Dark Sector

Riding high on a glaive of mutilation

Dave Harrison

When it comes to creating a edgy anti-hero, you want a character that exudes danger, has streak of nihilism, a genetic quirk and – preferably – dark hair. So what better than an immoral CIA agent with dark hair that can't feel pain? Surely the ultimate badass. But that wasn't enough for Digital Extremes, oh no – they've gone for an immoral CIA agent that can't feel pain... and has the right arm of monster. With a bladed frisbee built in. Christ.

This is Hayden Tenno, who is sent into the fictional Eastern European country of Lasria, a nation that has descended into chaos due to the outbreak of a virus, developed during the Cold War, that is turning civilians into monsters. It's this virus that has caused Tenno's mutated arm but, due to his pain tolerance, he hasn't gone completely 'monster' and so is left to pick his way through the mayhem using his special ops training and his glaive – that's the frisbee.

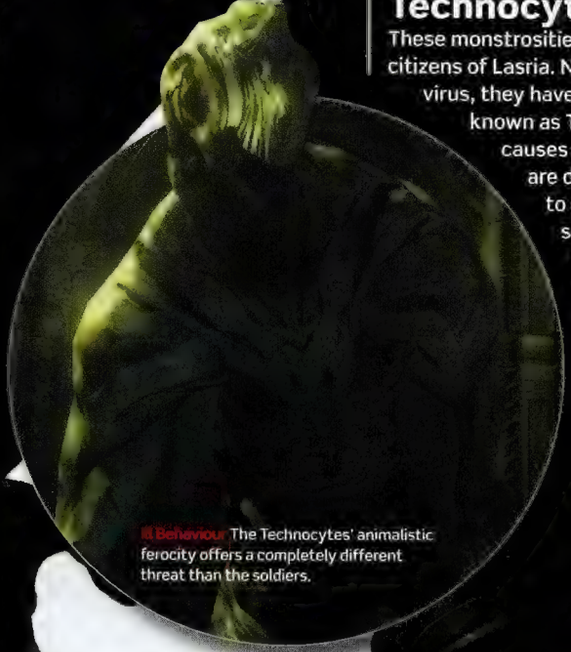
It's a mean and moody setting for an action game that wears its *Resi 4* influence and mutant-slaying frisbee on its sleeve. More soon.

Grunt and groan

Complicating matters in Lasria is the presence of a seemingly private army, who have been charged with the containment of the virus and the extermination of the infected – which, of course, includes Tenno. There's several different classes of soldiers, the most intriguing of which are those that attack with a poisonous and partly hallucinogenic gas that makes enemies seem bigger than they are.

Techno-Techno-Technocytes

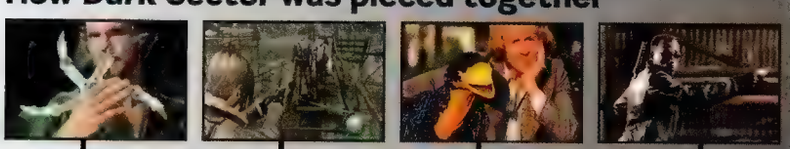
These monstrosities were once the mild-mannered citizens of Lasria. Now infected by the mystery virus, they have become mutated creatures known as Technocytes. Its seems the virus causes so much pain that the infected are driven mad, allowing the disease to completely take over the host – so it's only Hayden Tenno's tolerance of pain that has kept the virus in check and confined it to his right arm.



Behaviour The Technocytes' animalistic ferocity offers a completely different threat than the soldiers.

INFLUENCES

How *Dark Sector* was pieced together



Well Shafted Just look at those beutiful shafts of light. It's a great-looking game, certainly.

The light fantastic

Fittingly for the first next-gen game announced, *Dark Sector* really does look a step beyond most other games, mainly through its use of real time light effects. For instance when the light flickers over the metallic sinew of his mutant arm, the developers reckon you'll be able to detect enemies approaching from behind by the shadows they cast – which might have some interesting implications for the yet to be confirmed multi-player options.

Weapons of choice

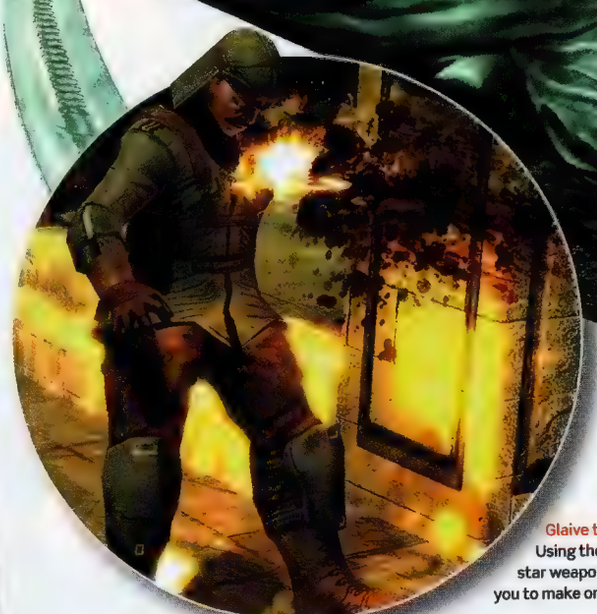
While the frisbee is the Tenno's primary weapon he can collect several conventional weapons such as an assault rifle and grenades during the game which can then be upgraded. The best way to use them is in combination with the glaive, so Tenno can send the bladed disc on an arc of destruction while filling the air with molten lead, before nonchalantly holstering the gun and catching the glaive.

Sherry rifle The weapons taken from the bodies of the fallen soldiers often run out of ammo. Back to the glaive, then.

Leccy attack Charging the glaive with electricity lets you stun enemies.

Fits like a glaive

A side effect – or perhaps the purpose of the mystery infection is the bladed glaive that forces it way out of the Tenno's arm. It becomes the primary weapon in the game as it can be thrown to slice enemies far away or up-close for melee attacks. It also has special powers that can be developed throughout the action.



Glaive trade Using the game's star weapon allows you to make one-hit kills.

CAN'T WAIT

Like this? Play these...

Resident Evil 4
PS2 97%
One of the greatest action games ever made.

Blade 2
PS2 51%
Perfect if you fancy some glaive practice.

Syphon Filter: Dark Mirror
PSP [redacted]
Just as dark and gloomy.

PSM3 Reckons

An interesting mish-mash of ideas brought to life with sumptuous graphics and effects. It'll be interesting to see how it develops.

ETA AUTUMN 2007

PS2

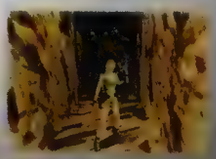
Pub Eidos | **Dev** Crystal Dynamics
Players 1 | **Genre** Action
FYI This is Lara Croft's seventh adventure

ON THE DISC

EVOLUTION

The chronicles of Lara Croft

Tomb Raider
Psone 1996
Where it all started for Lara and arguably still the best game of the lot.

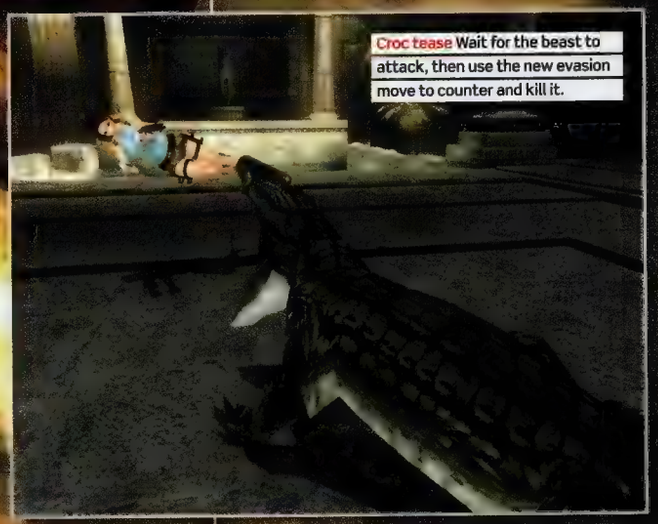


Tomb Raider III
PSone 1998
A pattern was being formed, and Ms Croft's appeal was sagging.

Angel Of Darkness
PS2
Oh dear. Lara's debut on PS2 was one of our biggest disappointments to date.

Tomb Raider Legend
PS2
Legend erased most of the bad memories with a return to form.

Hot for reacher The stunning new visuals showcase Lara's reinvention, while her improved agility has eliminated the stop-shuffle-align leaps of faith of old.



Croc tease Wait for the beast to attack, then use the new evasion move to counter and kill it.

Tomb Raider Anniversary

PS2 remake of Croft's original is vintage stuff

Nathan Irvine

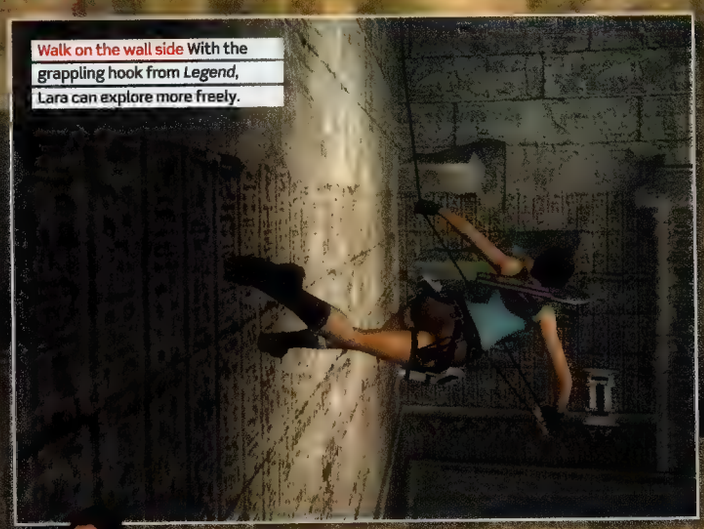
While it's hard to believe that Lara Croft used to look like a coal sack full of polygons, in Crystal Dynamic's lovingly crafted remake, her jaggy edges and pyramid-like lady-lumps have been replaced by softer, more human curves, her skin glistens when she gets wet, and clothes get scuffed by the dirt.

Eleven years after her PSOne debut, *Tomb Raider Anniversary* is basically the same game, but with re-jigged versions of familar puzzles and richer detail. Grappling hooks, slow-motion evasions and lush environments are welcome additions from *Tomb Raider: Legend*, but don't spoil the original's open-ended, exploration-heavy feel – the developers claim they learnt their lesson about *Legend's* hand-holding structure and obvious puzzles. The opening level in Peru looks beautiful, including a revised version of the infamous cog puzzle designed to show off Lara's improved agility and the graphic's dizzying scale. The T-Rex from the original – though no-one has seen it yet – promises to be much more intimidating than before, which looked like it had been made with discarded cereal boxes. Expect bags of extras, including in-game commentary from developer Toby Gard in which he explains changes from the first time out.

Time to move

Lara has new moves, like abseiling across walls and using branches to swing like a trapeze artist. She can also dodge when being attacked by beasts – and you'll need it to dodge the ferocious packs of wolves and bears. Time your button taps correctly and time will slow – *Prince Of Persia*-style – and allow you to evade a lunging raptor or the like.

A simple rehash? Far from it. Even those who played the original to death should find this worth playing and, just maybe, it might introduce a whole new generation to the First Lady of videogames.



Walk on the wall side With the grappling hook from *Legend*, Lara can explore more freely.

PSM3 Reckons

The fluid visuals of *Tomb Raider: Legend*; the taxing puzzles of the PSone classic. *Anniversary* could be Lara's best yet. Review next issue.

Pub Codemasters | **Dev** Spark Unlimited
Players 1 | **Genre** Action
FYI From the team behind Call Of Duty: Finest Hour

ON THE DISC
Turning Point will be on a DVD soon

Turning Point: Fall Of Liberty

What if the Nazis reached the USA?

Nathan Irvine

Fall Of Liberty? Sounds criminally like *Resistance: Fall of Man* to us, and the 'tributes' don't stop there. Codemaster's FPS features a similar 'alternate history' WWII setting, plus gaming's favourite baddies, the Nazis, and modernised weapons (like *Resistance*, again) as they storm into and take over New York (*Freedom Fighters?*), marching to world domination. In their way stand a handful of rebels (*Freedom Fighters? Hello?*) and you, Danny Carson. Played in first-person viewpoint, you'll don enemy uniform on stealth missions, watch as real-time destruction rips apart NYC's famous landmarks and go hand-to-hand with Krav Maga-inspired martial arts. It looks beautiful, but it's not the most revolutionary idea ever. But as formula games go, there's safety in numbers.

Dead pose day You'll be fighting alongside other civilians as you try to overthrow the Nazis.

Up on the roof

Your first encounter with the German forces is on top of New York's skyscrapers. Paratroopers float in on giant zeppelins and then parachute down to the city streets, but it's up to you to stop them before they land. You'll be able to leap to other rooftops, so you're not a sitting duck.

Mask a silly question And get a lead-filled answer from these night-vision equipped soldiers.

PSM3 Reckons

The developers did well with *COD: Finest Hour*, but we're worried by how uninventive it seems. Right now, this looks like an FPS-by-numbers.

PS3

Pub Activision | **Dev** Treyarch
Players 1 | **Genre** Action Adventure
FYI The game of the forthcoming film

ON THE DISC
See more of *Spider-Man 3* on this month's disc.

Spider-Man 3

Hands-on debut impresses, but only just

Dan Dawkins

1 It's disappointing and exciting all at once

From the top of the Empire State Building, where our demo begins, it looks incredible – with an epic hi-res horizon line sprawling back miles under rich cloud – but leap to ground level and it looks quite a lot like the – admittedly great – *Spider-Man 2*, with an odd sterile feel and lack of ambient effects, provoking mixed feelings.

2 Venom has unique moves

Since the game closely mirrors the plot of the movie, you only get to play in Spidey's more-powerful, but ultimately evil and parasitic, black-suit at key points. Black suit Spidey swings more quickly and aggressively, with equally ferocious attacks. Blue Spidey throws controlled punches, while the Venom version dives on his fallen foes and pounds them into submission. The Rage mode – a bit like Matrix slo-mo – lets you take out multiple foes in a heartbeat.

3 The scale is staggering

It's not fundamentally richer than the PS2 game – so no crashing through windows in real-time, or dynamic damage modelling with swarms of uniquely intelligent pedestrians – but it *does* look crisper, with more jagged architecture and vertignous skyscrapers. Glass fronted buildings cast stunning reflections, highlighting the Spidey suit's incredible next-gen texture detail. See the disc to get a better feel. It's quietly impressive.

4 Hidden skill moves

Accomplished players can string fallen goons between lamp-posts, then use them as a swinging punch bag – in real-time physics – before the cops arrive. You can even punch a foe off a skyscraper, watch him plummet, then yo-yo web him back up and dole out more punches.

5 Real-time cinema battles

Key boss battles involve real-time button pressing mini-games, like *Resi 4*'s QTE events, to mirror the movie. They're quite dynamic... until you fail and are forced to retry abruptly.

PSM3 Reckons

On the surface, little's changed bar a hi-res sheen – but that's no bad thing. Tune back for a full review next month, true believers.

Pub THQ | **Dev** Paradigm
Players 1-4 | **Genre** Driving
FYI Sequel to the old stunt racer

ON THE DISC
Trailer: Ignition on a disc soon
where we can get it

Stuntman: Ignition

Fun sequel to gruelling stunt driving sim

David Cook

Truck tricks

Stuntman: Ignition, like the original, is all about, well, performing stunts. Like this one, to your right – you'll be flooring it along, chased by a helicopter, when a truck blocks your way. You might find a handy ramp to take you over the top of it. If not, get your head down – you're going to have to go underneath it...

Big air There's much airborne action in *Ignition*. It's quite an exciting game, so far.

Test yourself

Too many cock-ups like this one on the left, and the director will shout 'Cut!' and you'll fail. Quick reflexes are needed to miss traps, although at the moment it's easy enough to remember their positions after a couple of tries and dodge them by rota. Perhaps more surprises are needed to avoid *Ignition* becoming more memory test than anything else.

PSM3 Reckons

Hands-on, it's excellent fun, but far too easy to remember traps and dodge them. Ironic, given the evil demands of the love/hate original.

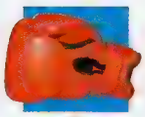
ETA AUG 2007

Your words, your pictures, your videos...

Your Space

Start

42 Letters
Choice cuts from the PSM3 mail sack.



43 Text PSM3
Your texts exposed to the world.

44 Robo-Mind
The robot sneers at your tech questions.

44 Poll Position
Take part in our monthly PSM3 poll.

45 MySpace
Our eight favourite readers this month

46 Reader Reviews
Think reviewing's easy? You try it.

47 Right or Wrong?
Disagree with our scores? Say so.

47 YouTube
The best gamer videos around.

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MySpace & the PSM3 blog Go to myspace.com/psm3 or check out psm3mag.com

Online Play the team at online games and win big

Letters To PSM3

Your letters and emails, sifted and printed

Have I got brews for you

A short while ago I discovered the wonders of PSP homebrew. It has completely altered the way I use my PSP. Don't get me wrong, I am still strongly against illegally downloaded games but surely everything else is only a good thing? I can now read full e-books on my PSP and transfer my files to my computer through WI-Fi instead of the USB cable. Not only is it practical, but have now been able to completely 'pimp' my PSP out – I have a different volume

"Homebrew has altered the way I use my PSP"

bar, icons, font and battery symbol thingy. What I don't understand is why Sony doesn't embrace these ideas and bring some of these extremely talented programmers into their employment. Surely these new features would boost their sales hugely if nothing else?
Jack Green, email

There's an enormous community of PSP 'power users' who've customised their PSPs to within an inch of their lives. And it's reassuring to hear that people are still discovering the joys of homebrew, especially when PSP is in danger of slipping gently into oblivion.

We've also had some letters expressing concern that we've apparently 'ditched' our PSP homebrew pages. Well stop fretting because we haven't – it's just on hiatus while we devote more pages to PS3. We are, after all, primarily a PlayStation 3 magazine. The homebrew pages will be back, and we'll be doing something rather special. But we want your ideas, especially people who are already part of the 'scene'. What should we cover? What tutorials would you like to see? Mail us at the usual address.

We'll also be bringing the world of homebrew to PS3. If you read our last issue, you'll have seen all the stuff about Linux. Installing this on your PS3 lets you create your own games and programs, not to mention the potential customisation options in the newly-revealed PlayStation Home. It's an exciting time to be part of the PlayStation universe, especially if you're a creative type or a burgeoning games designer.

Brews clues We've seen some really clever PSP mods and custom jobs on the net. Check out psp-spot.com.

Hate it or love it

I really cannot understand why Sony dislike European gamers so much. Whilst PS3 was released in Japan and USA in November, the UK had to wait til March 23 to get hold of one. Sheer arrogance! I checked out a PS3 in the local CeX store to play one at first hand. At first glance, I found PS3's graphics and gameplay to be nothing special. In looks, I found the console to be ugly – more a cross between a heater and a bread bin than a console. I will reserve judgement and will not purchase one on the launch day, and will wait until a price drop and for real quality titles to be released.
Harry Basi, email

Cash flow Loads of you lot are waiting for a price drop.

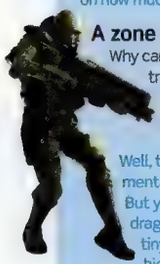
Crikey. You really have it in for Sony, don't you? We feel your pain, but think your fury at the delay is giving you the red mist. PS3 might have started

"You What?"

Thanks for writing. No. Really

When I was on the bus last week this chav on a bike deliberately slowed down in front of us then sped up when the bus passed. Then he'd get back in front and slow down again. If I was the driver I'd have run that scumbag kid down, and I'm not a violent man.
Grant, MySpace
Are... are you sure? You need a sexy pink panda whore on your MySpace page like I do.
Steve, MySpace
Do we though? Do we *really*? We do? Oh, OK...

Fight club
When's the best time to get a PS3? Now or when it goes down in price? **Anon**
Well, we don't really know when it's going to drop in price, so we can't really say... it depends on how much money you have.

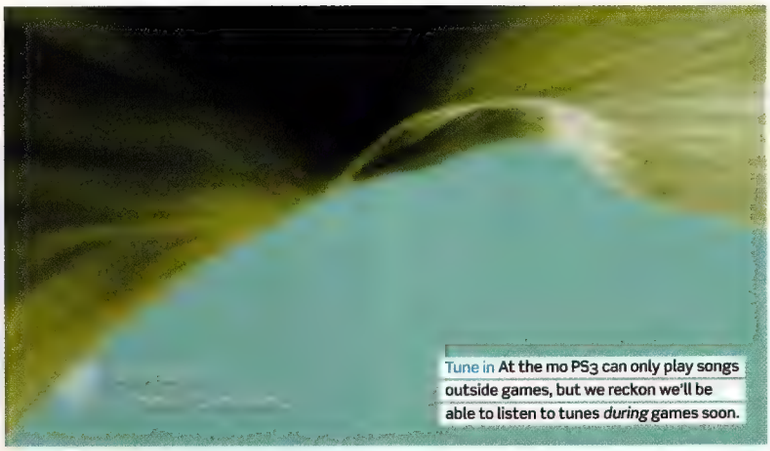


A zone to pick
Why can't Sony just show us the *Killzone 2* trailer? I think they're afraid to admit that it's not real and the game won't be out for about 100 years or something. Losers! **Gandalf**
Well, that's one theory. One slightly mental and probably inaccurate theory. But you're sort of right, they are dragging it on a bit, and showing us a tiny bit at GDC was just cheeky. Our biggest fear is that after all of this build-up, it'll actually turn out to be a bit trumpet... but it almost certainly won't. Guerilla are talented developers.

Rich tea biscuit
I'm not buying a PS3. It's too rich. **Anon**
Er, what? We're assuming you mean it's too expensive. That or you're some kind of hardware-munching lunatic...

Fight club
I'll have you all! Let's have a big fight and if I win you give me a PS3. OK?! **Anon**
We would, but you'd literally be dead within a second. So there's no point in trying.

Text us Send to 87103 and start your message with 'PSM3'.



Tune in At the mo PS3 can only play songs outside games, but we reckon we'll be able to listen to tunes *during* games soon.

slowly, but as our '20 future games' supplement this issue proves – not to mention our *Oblivion* review on page 52 – the next wave of games is stunning. See how you feel in a few months.

Music to his ears

I was thinking after seeing *The Darkness* video a few months – the one with the televisions that played videos. Why couldn't this be done with every game? No more loading screens, just videos taken off your PS3 hard drive. Or what if you could tune in TV channels? We've all had times that the only chance to play with your new favourite toy unluckily co-incides with The Simpsons. Instead of having to flick the AV button, you just press pause and bang! There it, is your show. Or you could play songs in *PES*. Shoot in that last minute goal – Ace Of Spades kicks in. Lose three-nil? Oasis play Don't Look Back In Anger or whatever. If only.
Colm O'Sullivan, email

Good idea, but also a bit of an odd one. Why would you want to stop shooting the Helghast in *Killzone* just to stop and watch Richard & Judy on an in-game telly? The music thing works though, and it probably will happen with a future PS3 firmware update. You can, after all, listen to your own tunes during play on Xbox 360. Anything beats listening to EA Trax, which usually consists of three good songs and a million dodgy college punk bands and Sean Paul remixes.

Hard to beat

Arrrgh! All the time I hear people whining about games. "This is too hard," they say or "How are you supposed to beat this guy?". I'm sick of it. For me, the challenge of a game is just as important as the gameplay. A while ago I cleared *Devil May Cry 3* (the normal one not, *Special Edition*) on Dante Must Die mode. Yes, it was pant-changingly hard and made me swear and scream and sweat like a dyslexic person on Countdown, but when that last epic battle was over and I stood victorious I was incredibly pleased with myself. Still am, in fact, so I say this to so-called 'gamers' – if you want to be spoon-fed a game, go back to *Crash Bandicoot* or something.
Anto McCann, email

You have to remember that there are a lot of different types of gamer out there. Some people like a challenge (like you, clearly) while others play games as a form of relaxation and prefer to just saunter through each level with the minimum of fuss. And, naturally, there are games that are targetted at these two unique types of gamer. The likes of *Okami* and *Final Fantasy XII* can be difficult, but because of the way they're designed you never break a sweat. You just try again. But, like you said, *Devil May Cry 3* would whip even the most relaxed Buddhist monk in the world up into a sweary, clammy frenzy. Especially Dante Must Die Mode. You know, that's so hard we almost think the developers put it in there as a joke.

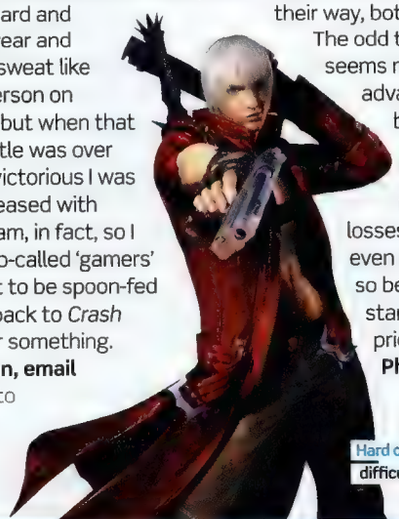
Cost cutter

A lot of people complain about the price of next-gen gaming, but so few seem to realise that it doesn't have to be so expensive. I have *Call Of Duty 3*, *Sonic The Hedgehog* and *Tony Hawk's Project 8* sitting in my house, with *Virtua Fighter 5*, *Rainbow 6 Vegas* and *Oblivion* on preorder, all costing just £33 each. By buying from America and Canada, I've saved £100 on games alone. I also have two controls pads on their way, both £25 apiece.

The odd thing is, no-one I know seems motivated to take advantage of this, even before the UK launch.

Their loss. If I'm going to spend £425 in one go, I may as well recoup the losses whatever way I can, even if I have to wait a week or so before the games arrive. I'll start buying locally when prices begin to drop.
Phil Tomlinson, email

You seem pretty focused



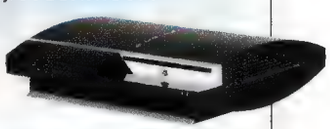
Hard cheese Some people get a buzz off difficult games. *DMC3* is *nails*.

'Best' of the Blog

Visit PSM3MAG.COM and have your say

"Home is a reason to buy PS3 over Xbox."
Posted by: [Tyler]

"Are there any consoles left that just play games? I don't care about achievements or chatrooms."
Posted by: Freshmetal



"Ken throws Blu-ray discs at Microsoft employees."
Posted by: Mazman

'Best' of the Rest

Meanwhile, Joe reacts to the news that European PS3s won't be 100% backwards compatible with all PS2 games. "It's a real kick in the teeth for all of us long-suffering Europeans. Just how much money will this save them? Not a lot, I'm guessing..." But Blind Eskimo takes the opposite opinion. "It doesn't really matter to me considering I have shite PS2 games. And anyway, *Killzone 2* is coming out. Forget PS2 games."

Blog We post every day. Mostly. Go to psm3mag.com for more.

I wonder what it would look like if Sonic and Mario had a baby...
Anto, MySpace
A hedgehog with a moustache? Or a fat Italian man with spines? Hrm...
Probably blue with a spanner up its arse.

Saint Nothing, MySpace
Or, er, that.
I don't have a fancy ringtone. I don't really get many calls though. Probably because I just spent the last two hours playing Enter The Matrix.

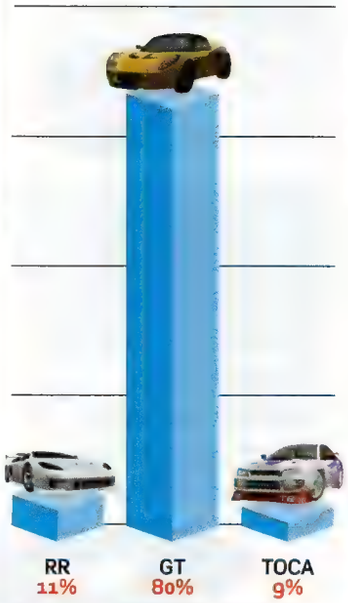
James, MySpace
Dan D disagrees -but don't sacrifice your life for a bum action game.
I haven't got a phone because they're useless.
Nezumiiro Kitsune, MySpace
You heard it here first: phones = useless.
Hot anime girls – or bishojo – are OK, but I prefer Ecchi which is more suggestive than erotic. Not that I watch porn or anything.
Peetry, MySpace
Oh, of course not, Mister Terminology.

Your Space

Poll Position

We ask. You Answer

This Month Best racer: *Ridge Racer*, *Gran Turismo* or *TOCA*.



Next Month Best music game: *Parappa*, *Gitaroo Man* or *Rez*?

MySpace Cast your vote by emailing psm3@futurenet.co.uk

on saving money. Some people just prefer the convenience of popping down the shop and picking up a game, regardless of how much it costs them. But each to their own, and you'll certainly be better off financially than a lot of gamers.

Cheat and tidy

In the old PSM2 magazine, there was a page for Action Replay Max codes for PS2 games. Why have you taken that away? Why haven't you continued to put Action Replay Max codes in the new mag? I miss them.

I wish you could make PSM3 a double-sized magazine, so half of the magazine could have codes for games. Is it possible? How and where on the net can I download complete A-Z guides, hints, walkthroughs and cheats books for all the old, new and latest games for all type of consoles?

Remen77, email

Call us mental, but aren't games supposed to be a challenge? But in answer to your query: there's this website called Google. And when you type stuff you're looking for into Google, it finds it for you. It's an amazing new website that's taking the net by storm. We don't do Action Replay Max codes anymore 'cos you can just get 'em off the internet. But, in the spirit of helpfulness, we'll point you at www.gamefaqs.com. Double-sized mag? Milf's ten-past-insane as it is.

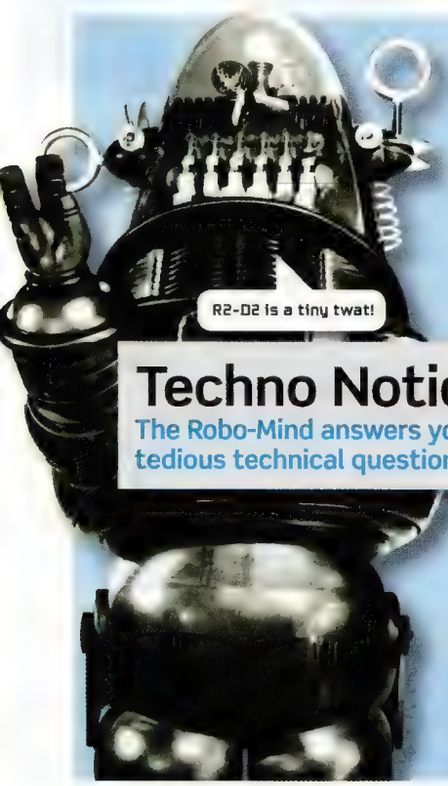
Family affairs Great TV shows have a habit of spawning putrid games.

Bad to the bone

What's the worst game you have ever played? The game you wanted to stop playing the moment you started? Or made you wish you could give them a lower mark than zero in the review? Or made you wish you could just shoot the developers?

Joe Hennell, email

Andy has a special kind of hatred for *Fightbox*, a dismal game based on a preposterous BBC telly programme about shit 3D robots. Rich, a massive Family Guy fan, hated its spin-off game so much it almost made him cry with disappointment. Milf's least favourite game is also the least scoring in PSM history, crappy futuristic



Techno Notice

The Robo-Mind answers your tedious technical questions

Dear Robo-Mind

My anti-PS3 friends have been saying that PS3 games are chipped and, once played on one console, it is impossible to take the game and play it on another console. Is this true or is it just a malicious rumour?

Halsey, email

"Bloooaoroaoroarp! Whaaat?! How can you 'chip' a disc? You stupid fzzzztttt. Games won't be 'locked' for other consoles. That's the insane, jumbled ramblings of a fleshy fool. Do you really think Sony would get away with that? You should be ashamed of yourself, you silly little czzzttttfffp. Eject yourself from my query pod immediately. You're stinking up the place and sweating all over my lovely polished floor. BEGONE. Bffzzzt."

Dear Robo-Mind

Hi there. I was just hoping that it's possible for you to email me the site address where I can register my network ID "handle" for PS3.

Regardt Volschenk, email

"Rarrrffzzzzttt! Have you any IDEA how my brain operates? Billions of electrical impulses are spinning around inside my mind dome, sending and receiving information at a rate so stupefying, just trying to write the figures down would melt your limp human brain into a grey omelette. And you're asking me to find you a WEBSITE ADDRESS?! Look, diczzzffffttt, just point your pitiful browser to http://snipurl.com/1d1l4 and you can sign up there."

Dear Robo-Mind

How do you connect a PS3 to a computer screen? I was told you can use an HDMI to DVI cable. Is this true

Regardt Volschenk, email

"You are CORRECT. But, as is typical of your despicable race, you're missing a key detail. DVI cables don't have sound. So you COULD play PS3 on your monitor in HD, but you wouldn't hear anything and there are no other ways of running sound from the PS3 itself. YOU LOSE. Unless you want to play without sound, although I don't imagine you do. BFZBZBFT! There are adapters you can buy that convert regular HDMI cables to DVI, which is another option, but again, there's no sound. Now BUGGER OFF."

Computer love So you can get HD through a monitor, but without sound. Booo.

@ Email us Got a question? Email it to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject 'Robo'.

"PS3 is a cross between a heater and a bread bin"
Harry Basi email

racer *Jet Ion GP*. Nathan's is a recent one, in the form of *Def Jam: Icon*. He loves the series and playing this rhubarb was like being kicked square in the nuts by your own mother. Dave hasn't recovered from the *He-Man* game. Finally, Dan D's malice extends to *Little Britain*, the monumentally bum crapfest we reviewed last issue and awarded a startling 18 percent.

Looks can kill

Why is it that some games look amazing like *Resident Evil 4* and *Shadow Of The Colossus*, yet others look like absolute shit. If it's the same hardware why do some developers make games that look good and other ones make crappy looking games?
Rory McGill, email

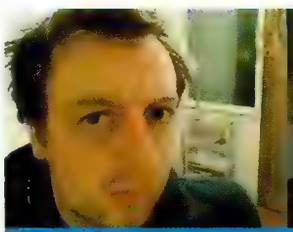
Simple, it's all down to how good the developer is at making games. Team Ico, say, know the PS2 hardware inside out, while smaller developers with lower budgets struggle to compete with them.

Evil dead **If only all developers had the same design skills as Capcom's *Resident Evil 4* team.**

UK myspace a place for friends
Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and join us

PSM3's Top Eight

MySpace readers who rock our world



Mattster

ABOUT HIM

"I am Matt. I want to be rich and famous. I'm an idiot. I know quotes from films I've only seen once."

INTERESTS

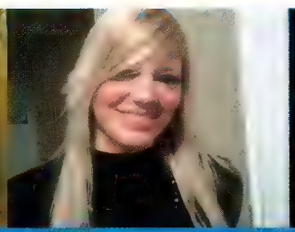
"I like ice hockey, music, films, women, dancing like I'm being tazered by an overzealous policeman and going to the zoo among other such things."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

GTA: San Andreas

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Our dancing has often been compared to violent tazer-induced thrashing. Although we *were* being tazered at the time, so...



Mrs Choo

ABOUT HER

"I'm Sara. I'm a massive Liverpool fan. I'll make this clear: all Mancs eff off. I can't bear you. I want to meet the singer from The Kooks, Jimmy Choo and The Hoff."

INTERESTS

"Alcohol, football, vodka, playing my PS2, *Final Fantasy*, booze, my season ticket with LFC, The Kooks, Paolo Nutini, The Killers, Razorlight, The Fratellis, All American Rejects, Justin Timberlake, Johnny Cash."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

FFXII, GTA: Vice City, PES6

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

Certainly not for the comment about Mancs, our Nathan being one, but just 'cause she's a games-playing girl who likes The Hoff.

Justin

ABOUT HIM

"I'm a proud member of Rumjunkie, my band. I play guitar and I sing too. I tend to wear my heart on my sleeve so you can probably tell how I'm feeling with one look. I like my girlfriend and drinking sambuca straight from the bottle."

MUSIC

"I'm listening to The Wildhearts, Animal Alpha, The Offspring, Audioslave, Rage Against The Machine, My Chemical Romance, Green Day, Sum 41, Nirvana, Jimi Hendrix, The Beatles."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Okami, Gran Turismo HD

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He writes for us sometimes, plus his band Rumjunkie rock. Hard.

Brad

ABOUT HIM

"Some people call me nu-rave and an art nerd. I like hanging out with mates and going to gigs."

INTERESTS

General: "I like music and football to name a few things."
Music: "Klaxons, Pull Tiger Tail, Cansei De Ser Sexy, The Holloways, New Young Pony Club, Clor, The View."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Scarface, Kingdom Hearts 2

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

Because he's one of those fashionable nu-rave types, glowsticks and all. Just stay off the mind-bending drugs...

Raralara

ABOUT HER

"I have no clue where I'm going."

INTERESTS

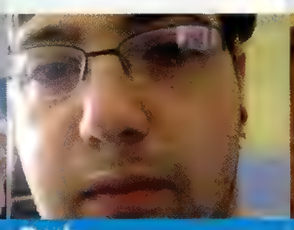
"These things rawk: Friends, music, MSN, guys, vodka, noise, flirting, black and pink, *Final Fantasy*."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Silent Hill 2, Devil May Cry 3

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

Crikey, a lot of girls like *FF*, don't they? And that's fine with us. The more the merrier. We like black pink too. Well, pink. Pink pants.



Gash

INTERESTS

"My interests include socialising with my friends, spending time on the internet, music (a really big thing for me), playing videogames, tattoos and piercings. I have two piercings and one ink."

MUSIC

"David Bowie, Sid Vicious, Joe Strummer, Johnny Rotten, RZA, GZA, Inspectah Deck, Snoop."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Tony Hawk's Project 8

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

We have an 'ink' too. An ink pen. We use it to draw happy faces on our arms and pretend they're tattoos when we're talking to girls.

Andy Beast

ABOUT HIM

"I'm a lanky bastard, reaching a whole six feet and two inches. I'm generally a friendly person."

INTERESTS

"Playing drums, rock and roll, going to badass concerts, skateboarding, surfing, basketball, driving, glam rock clothing, spinning drum sticks, eating pizza, protecting the environment."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

Guitar Hero 2

WHY WE MADE HIM TOP 8

He's a hard rocking, hard drinking, fast living motherlover. And he really, really likes pizza, yet is a slip of a man. Good metabolism.

Innamorata

ABOUT HER

"Small, dark haired, pickle obsessed. Like eating cheese and drinking caramel syrup. Enjoys getting boyfriend drunk and taking advantage of him."

INTERESTS

Music: "Avril Lavigne, McFly." Movies: "The Crow, Serenity."

CURRENTLY PLAYING

GTA: San Andreas

WHY WE MADE HER TOP 8

We love pickles, cheese and caramel. We dream of eating some caramelised pickled cheese.

MySpace Want to make our Top Eight? Go to www.myspace.com/psm3 and send us a friend request. We'll welcome you on board straight away.

You What?

I bought a bootleg version of 300. I'm gonna go to the cinema and watch it next week though. Yessss, that's what I'm going to do...
KAPKAP, MySpace
We're reporting you to the police.
There'll be PS3s flying from Sony's hands when *MGS4* comes out.
Karl, MySpace
You're implying that Sony is a man who owns a market stall.
Dan D looks like Chris Jericho.
Blake, MySpace
He bloody well does, doesn't he? Although we told him and he got a bit upset.
I love you. I bought Hard Boiled after reading your *Stranglehold* feature and now I'm trying to see as many John Woo films as I can.
Biscuit, MySpace
Glad to be of service. Our favourite is Hard Target. The one with Van Damme in it.
[picture of some poo]
Anon, MySpace
Yeah, thanks for that. It really brightened up the PSM3 MySpace...

Reader Critic

Disagree with our reviews? Then show us how it's done

Rock the bells Sean reckons the addition of some punk songs would make the tracklist perfect.

Guitar Hero 2

PSM3 MySpace regular Sean 'The Dark Enigma' Welsh loves to rock out

Reader Profile

Name Sean Welsh
Location Dundee
Fave games *GTA: San Andreas, MGS3, Tony Hawk's Underground, Hitman 2.*
About me I love heavy metal and rock music, comedy and action films, and I'm a big gamer although I tend to stick to sequels.

This game is very addictive. I hadn't played the previous one so this was new territory for me and my gaming fingers. From the first go, I knew this was going to be special.

If you're new to the game, Easy mode is the place to start but it won't keep you content for long. It didn't take me long to get the hang of it and it was on to Normal mode. It steps up a bit here, but is no different from Easy mode, really. There is a Practice section to get used to the controls and to work on advanced features. Hard mode is where your inner Jimi Hendrix will come into play and you have to start using all the buttons on the guitar – not easy.

Prepare yourself for sore fingers. As the notes whizz past you on screen, you almost go into some kind of trance, everything around you fades, and you feel like you're in the game.

There is lack of punk songs on here, however, and a lot of older rock tracks which won't be everyone's cup of tea – bands like Green Day or The Offspring could have made the choice of songs perfect.

Still, there is a lot to keep you playing. I find myself going back to songs and trying to beat my score. You can unlock extra songs with cash you earn in Career mode, but they aren't very good and I don't think they add much to the tracklist.

This is a game that doesn't get boring. You will find yourself, as I did, picking it back up and having a go again. Perfect for parties where you can play against a friend, this game is a rock history lesson where you're centre stage. **Sean Welsh**

Reader Verdict

The best music game on PS2, but could have done with more punk songs. **95**

@ Email us Subject 'Critic' to psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Or post a review to the usual address.

Mad Maestro

Obscure Bemani from the mists of time

As with most Bemani games there isn't much to *Mad Maestro*, but it's still awesome. You play as an amateur conductor who gets a mission to save the local concert hall. You do this by collecting good musicians for your orchestra until you finally have a mind-blowing concert in said hall to convince the townspeople that it's a good thing. You collect the musicians by showing them your conducting talent throughout the game, performing every known classical masterpiece you can think of, from Edvard Grieg through Tchaikovsky to Beethoven. And even if you don't like classical music, these are beautiful to listen to. You really feel that you are conducting the orchestra, and it's that feeling that makes this such an excellent game. **90**

Stein-Inge Kummeneje

Field Commander

Control a war in the palm of your hand

This is by far the superior turn-based strategy game on PSP, not that there are exactly hundreds anyway. It takes a variety of military vehicles, from boring footsoldiers, to battleships, tank busters (giant planes) and tanks. That is what makes *Field Commander* so good, the variety of vehicles from land to air to sea. Another nice feature is when you attack an enemy unit, it zooms in on the fight. The graphics are good, but not the best on PSP though. The game does require strategy and a lot of patience, but when you win it's very rewarding and it fits beautifully onto the PSP. A must buy, especially if you have dreams of being a dictator.

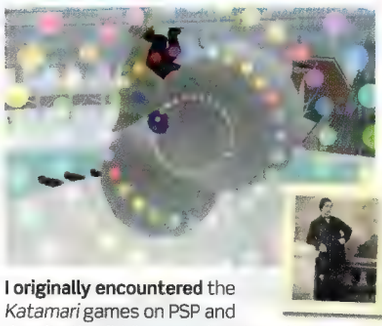
James Halsey

90

"Homebrew has altered the way I play my PSP."
Jack Green on PSP customisation

We Love Katamari

We love it, you love it and Matthew loves it



I originally encountered the *Katamari* games on PSP and despite the fiddly control system, the game became a huge part of my life. So I immediately began a hunt for the Ps2 game and was not disappointed. The game has the most fantastic characters of any game I've ever encountered bar *Vib Ribbon*. The gameplay uses a pretty simple formula: roll up items, the bigger your Katamari ball the more you can roll up. The variety of objects you can roll is staggering, starting with tiny objects such as sweets, board game pieces and cats and mice and then, at the end of some major levels, skyscrapers, islands and dinosaurs. With so much wonder to discover and hundreds of unlockables – including over 20 playable characters – it will keep you playing for months.

93

Matthew Allison

PSM3 You were so right!

Reader love

"I don't have a PSP so I am glad they made a version of VCS for PS2."

Devendra, email

GTA: VCS

We said "A welcome trip back to Vice City, but *GTA* is in need of a revamp if it's to shine on PS3."

PSM87 | Dave Meikleham | 83%

"Boo! How many games can they squeeze out of the *GTA3* engine?!"

Takoyaki, email

PSM3 You were so wrong!

YouTube The Video Zone

Out there gamer vids from the cyberdepths

Parappa cosplay by JunoCecilio

MAD This footage from a Portugese anime convention shows a man dressed as a paper Parappa dancing about to Chop Chop Master Onion's kung-fu rap. It's been giving us nightmares. http://snipurl.com/1dktb

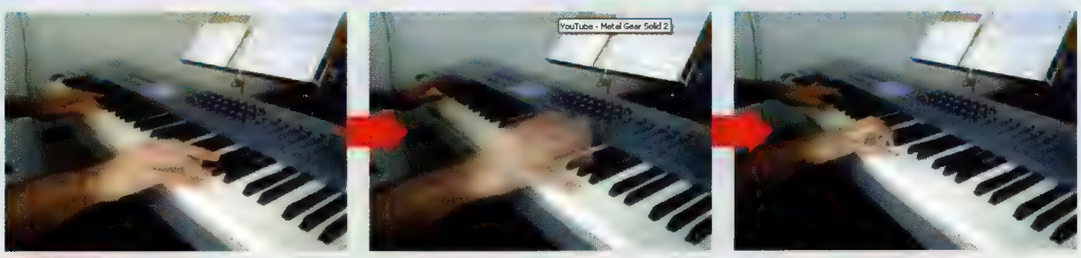
PSP 'rap' by WHENMUDSTANDZONEDGE

EARACHE "I love PSP/it's the only handheld for me/mature games are on the PSP/PSP has *GTA*/I love the PSP." And so it goes on for three minutes. Genuine fan or inept Sony viral marketing? http://snipurl.com/1dku8

PS3 launch chaos by Digitalworldtokyo

RIOT This video shows the chaos that erupted in Tokyo last year when PS3 was launched. In the middle of the video you see people being crushed in an enormous queue. Madness. http://snipurl.com/1dkuu

MGS2 theme on piano by NightShader1



MUSICAL Wow. This bloke's a bit good at playing piano. Here's his rendition of film composer Harry Gregson-Williams' epic theme tune for *Metal Gear Solid 2*. Awesome fingering. http://snipurl.com/1dkvg

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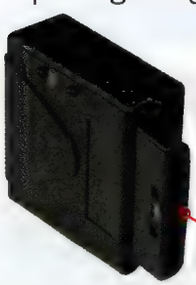
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PSM3

May 2007
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Medal Of Honor Vanguard
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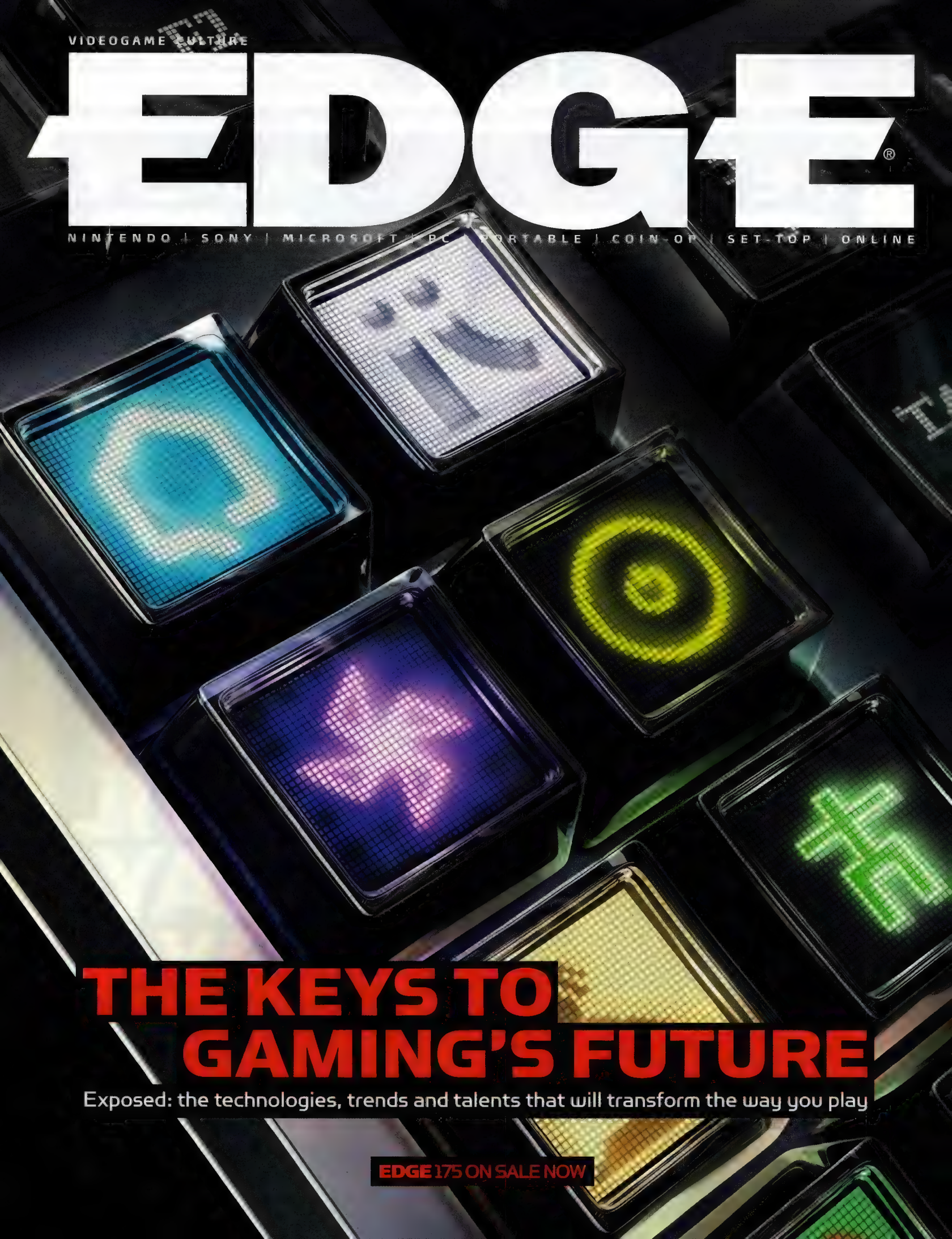
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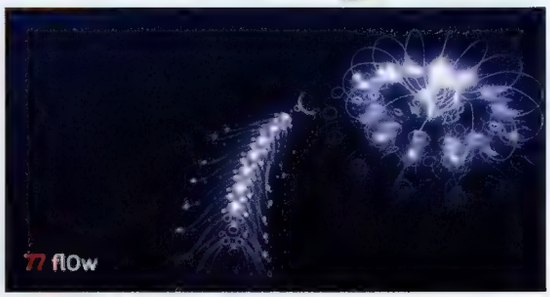
PSM3 Reviews

Instant PlayStation justice



60 Ratchet: Size Matters

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"Driving lessons from a moose"

Parappa The Rapper page 66

PSM3 review scoring system

0-29 **Rubbish**
An absolute stinker and an insult to gaming. The makers should be ashamed.

30-49 **Poor**
Why did they do that? Some simple playtesting could have worked wonders.

50-69 **All right**
Hey it works, and we can see what they were trying to do. And that's about it.

70-84 **Good**
Worth playing, especially if you're a fan of the genre. It just lacks that touch of greatness.

85-89 **Superb**
This is the sweet spot. If a game scores in this zone it's definitely worth your money.

90+ **Amazing**
You must get this. Failure to do so would mean missing out on a real console classic.

PSM3 BUY IT

The Award
If you see this, then you should buy that game.

The Team

In tribute to Little Big Planet, we've drawn the reviews team...

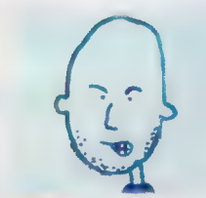
Daniel Dawkins
Specialist in Extreme sports, the property market
Playing *Okami:* "I'm not keeping the wolf from my door."

Nathan Irvine
Specialist in Sports games and buying lots of furniture.
Playing *Rogue Galaxy:* "Isn't that an evil bar of chocolate?"

Andy Kelly
Specialist in Role-players, retro, and *scarves with T-shirts.*
Playing *Yakuza:* "The mobsters' suits look satisfyingly emo."

David Cook
Specialist in Shooters, platformers and Jolly Ranchers.
Playing *Steambot Chronicles:* "I'm sure my face isn't *this* fat."

Steve Bailey
Specialist in Role-playing games and beanie hats.
Playing *Oblivion:* "It's bigger than the *whole universe.* Yes."



Joel Snape
Specialist in Really violent fighting games, Brazil.
Playing *Virtua Fighter 5:* "I'm learning moves for cage fighting."

Disagree with our reviews? Email your outraged rant to **psm3@futurenet.co.uk**

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Bethesda
Price £50 | **Release** April
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
We'll have *Oblivion* on the disc next time

The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion

One role-playing game to rule them all...

PSM3 BUY IT

KNOW IT NOW

- Mammoth-zilla RPG world? ✓
- Over 200 quests to complete? ✓
- Evolve yourself however you like? ✓
- Pimps doing drive-bys on working ladies? ✗

Waist-high objects that your double-jumping character can't get over. Invisible walls. Locked doors that refuse to open even when hit with an anti-tank rocket. Videogames are full of incoherent touches that can shatter the illusion of us being psyche-deep in a fantasy world, however pretty, exciting or full of stank-ass ladies that world may be. And you know what? So is *Oblivion*. Yep. But that's OK. That doesn't stop it being one of the most absorbing and elaborate RPG experiences of recent years, possibly *ever* if you've never ventured into the murky world of PC gaming. Sure, there are invisible walls, but they're at *the edge of the world*, not in some corridor where you want to go left but the only actual choice is to go right. When you apply the term 'RPG' to *Oblivion*, you realise that too many of the other adventures you've been playing should be called Role-Following Games, not Role-Playing Games.

Oblivion opens with your chosen character – constructed from a wide variety of face/race/body options – locked in a dank and whiffy cell in the dungeon beneath Imperial City, the capital of the land of Cyrodiil. Guards appear and escort the Emperor through a hidden escape hatch in your cell, taking you with them for reasons we won't spoil. What takes place next is one hell of a tutorial, if only because of its length. Down through caves, sewers and multiple underground passageways... if

›

"Possibly one of the most absorbing RPGs ever"

Got the painters in

Art can sometimes be too captivating...

Roam the land of Cyrodiil for just one single hour and you'll probably end up sniffing out a few quests whether you mean to or not. You mostly pick up quests by talking to folk and following the available strands of dialogue, or even by overhearing some people having a gossip. Joining guilds is perfect for questing, too. So, out of the dozens and dozens of missions available here's one of the best – you've got to rescue a fella who's trapped inside his own painting, by entering it and exploring an otherworld that's rendered to look like an impressionist painting that's come to life. Lovely. Also, keep an eye out for 'Arkved's Tower'. That one's another gem of a quest, too. But there are loads more to find.

Damn bones Skeletons are a common enemy in *Oblivion* – they'll shatter into piles of physics-laden bones, while arrows will simply bounce off them.

The scenery

The great outdoors

Some of the sights awaiting a tourist...

All gold The White Gold tower in the Imperial City can be seen from miles and miles away. What a sense of scale *Oblivion* has.

Green fingers Wandering the forest? Be sure to pick up some alchemy ingredients as you go...

Trick 'n' retreat This temple? The main story leads you here, a secret haven for a very special treasure indeed.

Mum's gone to Iceland It's not all lush green flora – up north, you'll find things get chillier as you travel.

Ob-liberation The town of Kvatch is where you meet your first *Oblivion* gate, and saving the town is a big showdown.

The archers Once your archery skill improves, you can draw an arrow for as long as you want without tiring.

you're the obsessive type or a bit of a wanderer, it could easily take up an hour of your time. That's because *Oblivion* has a *lot* of lessons that it has to try and teach you, including the vagaries of combat, stealth, alchemy, spellcasting, self-defence, lockpicking, acrobatics, shortcut menus, looting... it's a little more complex than *Ridge Racer 7*, for sure.

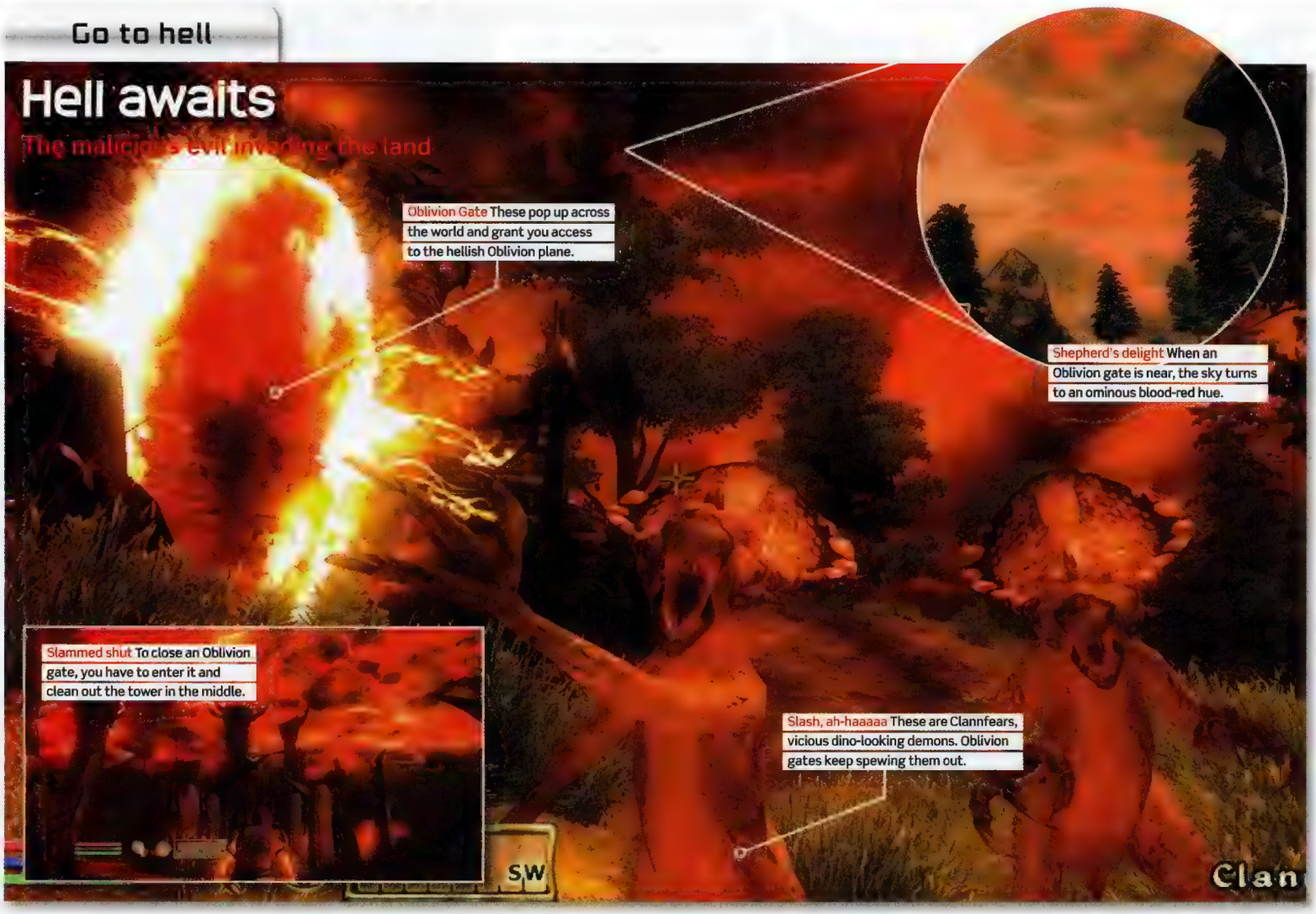
Eyes wide open

But don't worry about taking notes. Y'see, once you leave the sewers you'll be treated to one of the greatest money shots in gaming, as if the developers had indeed been holding their hands over your eyes in order to give you a reward for graduating. Leave the sewers and – BAM! – you're outside. The sun smiles down on a rippling lake, hundreds of trees speck the mountains in every direction, the music changes from grim rumbling to airy orchestral ambience... and there you have it. Welcome to *Oblivion*.

So where in the hell do you go next? Well, that's completely up to you. A map and a compass marker will guide you to your first quest in the storyline, but that's just a serving suggestion. From here, you could just explore, ransacking caves and forts, building your character up in the manner you wish and become the richest person in the land (after buying a home in each of the towns, naturally) before even attempting to unravel the main plotline. You

Garlic bread!?
Want to be a vampire? Hey, it's possible, thanks to the selection of contagious diseases that feature in *Oblivion*.

Go to hell


Hell awaits
The malicious evil invading the land
Oblivion Gate These pop up across the world and grant you access to the hellish Oblivion plane.
Shepherd's delight When an Oblivion gate is near, the sky turns to an ominous blood-red hue.
Slammed shut To close an Oblivion gate, you have to enter it and clean out the tower in the middle.
Slash, ah-haaaaa These are Clannfears, vicious dino-looking demons. Oblivion gates keep spewing them out.

could join one guild – choose from Fighter, Mage, Thief or the Dark Brotherhood of Assassins – or join them all, and be trained and nurtured as you rise up through the ranks. You could become an outlaw and go on a murdering and housebreaking rampage, but be prepared to cope with the increasing bounty on your head as a result – some folk might even stop talking to you if you've too much infamy, while others may suddenly have much more to say. Or you could just traipse around the shore of the lake, scrapping with mud crabs, sniffing out the odd treasure chest and picking herbs to blend potions with, before taking in your first *Oblivion* sunset.

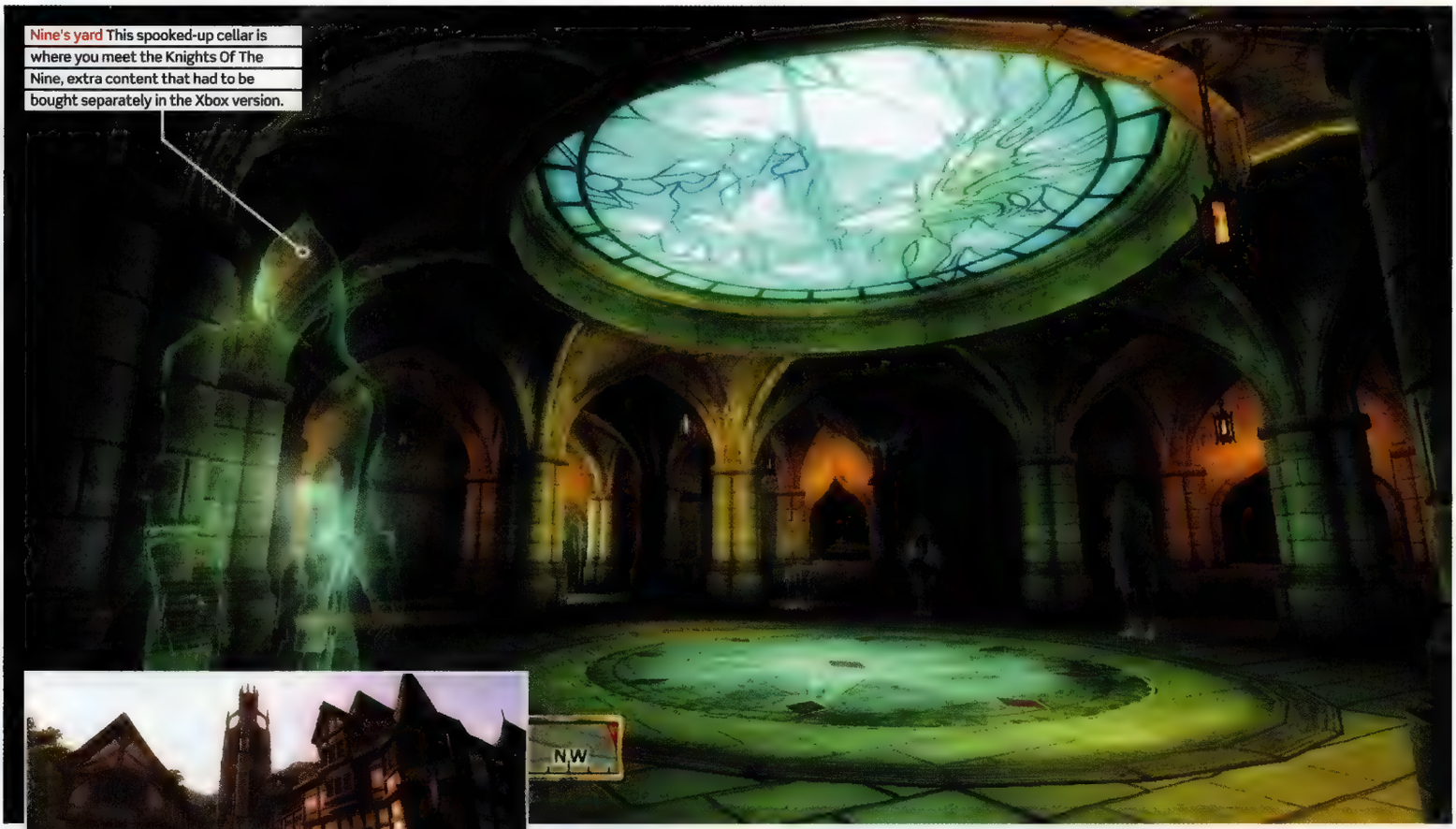
This world is enough

Is it sinking in yet? This isn't so much a game as an *entire world*, one the richest you'll yet have seen and one where you define what it means to you as you go. That doesn't mean it's for everyone: if you don't dig its fantasy style, then you won't last long. Character faces and animation can be sketchy – especially if you choose to play in ungainly third-person instead of first-person – and it's not a game that can be classed as a rollercoaster ride: you're definitely the driver, not the passenger, in *Oblivion*. There are some 200 quests to be unearthed, but very few are going to plop into your lap (but when they do, the friendly journal/map system lets you keep tight track of things, and you can fast-travel to any location you've previously visited). You'll have to journey and talk to the hundreds of NPCs you'll meet, and boy do they talk – every line of dialogue is voiced, so don't be surprised to notice repetition. But then, if Bethesda had given every person their own lines and speech, we'd not be seeing *Oblivion* until 2019.

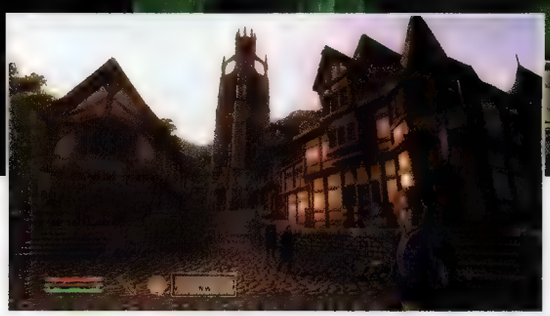
Visually, it's often stunning, but it attempts to packs in such an expanse that you can expect some rough patches. The frame rate's not perfect, the draw distance on certain portions of the scenery can be too noticeable and distant areas (despite being an improvement over the Xbox 360 version) will often be made up of grubby textures. But if you can suspend your disbelief, there's plenty to entrance the senses: indoor environments are mostly splendid, especially the Elven shrines you'll find dotted around the world, and there's many a swish lighting effect to be seen; *Oblivion* is one game where being outside *feels* like being outside. Ditto indoors.

Level headcase

There's another bugbear to mention – the levelling system is difficult to get your head around, so much so that we're not going to even attempt to explain it here. But, however many straggly bits of design



Nine's yard This spooked-up cellar is where you meet the Knights Of The Nine, extra content that had to be bought separately in the Xbox version.



we highlight, *Oblivion* is still a fantastic achievement. Even the duller quests available, involving nothing but a yomp to a nearby mine to retrieve an object, ram home the width of possibilities forever on offer, where one mission can so very easily lead you to two more, or just let you mooch off whenever you like, and continue roving aimlessly. It's a game world with its own culture, mythology, and history – the books you see on shelves in people's homes? You can read those, page by page, with certain tomes offering useful one-off stats boosts. You can make and name your own spells, or enchant your own equipment, choosing your own combination of pre-made effects. You can just focus on building skills, since each has its own rewards for progress – archery results in the ability to zoom while you aim, while agility mastery lets you skip across the surface of water etc.

There's simply a phenomenal amount to get stuck into, even though, say, melee combat can feel a little clunky. It brings so many elements and ideas together – add pickpocketing, a dialogue-persuasion minigame and a gladiatorial arena league to the list of aforementioned features, as well as a shedload of stuff we've no space to mention – and you could well find reason to kiss your life goodbye, and spend months snogging the slow-burning brilliance of *Oblivion*. It's a game that shoots for the moon, and manages to break cloud cover, offering an experience that no other PS3 title can lay claim to. Just be warned – it's not perfect, but if you can relax that need to nitpick then *Oblivion*, when its myriad bits come together, can often feels close enough. **Steve Bailey**

Dark matters

The Dark Brotherhood questline is the best in the game. But you'll need to commit a serious crime before you get invited to join them. Are you up for turning crim?

Fave Feature

"Night vision turns the world blue and lets you scope out the shadows"

PSM3 Verdict

***The Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion* contains...**
Lush landscapes | Physics | Millions of miles to explore | Trolls and that

Overall An incredible open-ended experience, but you're going to need patience to truly savour it.

93

Pub Sony | **Dev** High Impact Games
Price £35 | **Release** Out Now (import)
Multi-player 1-4

ON THE DISC
Size Matters will be on your disc next time

Going, going, gun The weapons are as ludicrous as any *Ratchet* game. There are normal machine guns, death-dealing devices firing bees and trees. Nice.

PSM3 BUY IT

IMPORT

Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters

Can Ratchet bring the big guns to Sony's little one?

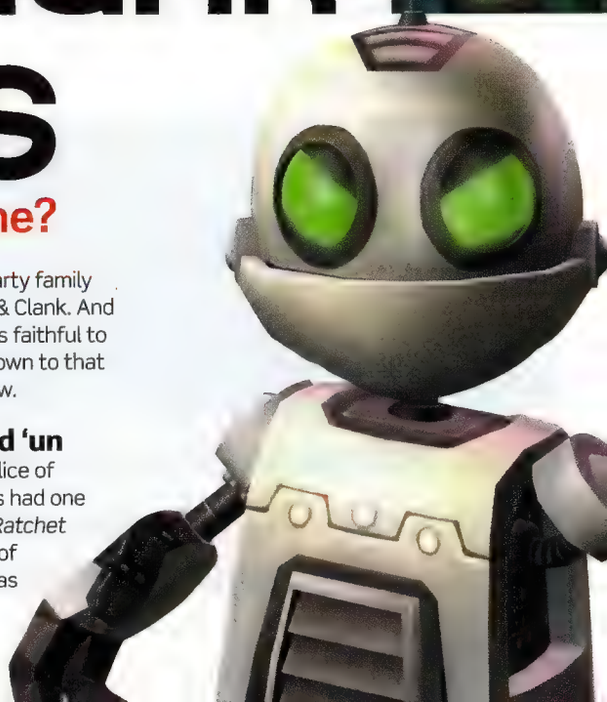
KNOW IT NOW

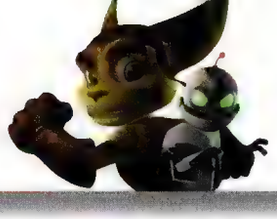
- **Flexible camera options?** ☑
- **Excessive firepower and colourful stages?** ☑
- **A variety of mini-games?** ☑
- **As furious as the PS2 versions?** ☒

PSP may have a widescreen display, but it's also got a habit of squishing things as well as stretching them. That's mostly the fault of the handheld conversions of PS2 franchises, full-fat experiences that have to be warped into something leaner in order to survive on a platform where the joypad *is* the console. And so, after some more cleverly downsized experiences (think *Daxter*, or, fingers crossed, the forthcoming *God Of War* PSP), Sony has enlisted High Impact Games to broaden the first-party family with a remoulding of Ratchet & Clank. And they've even tried to remain as faithful to the series as possible, even down to that knowing pun in the subtitle. Aw.

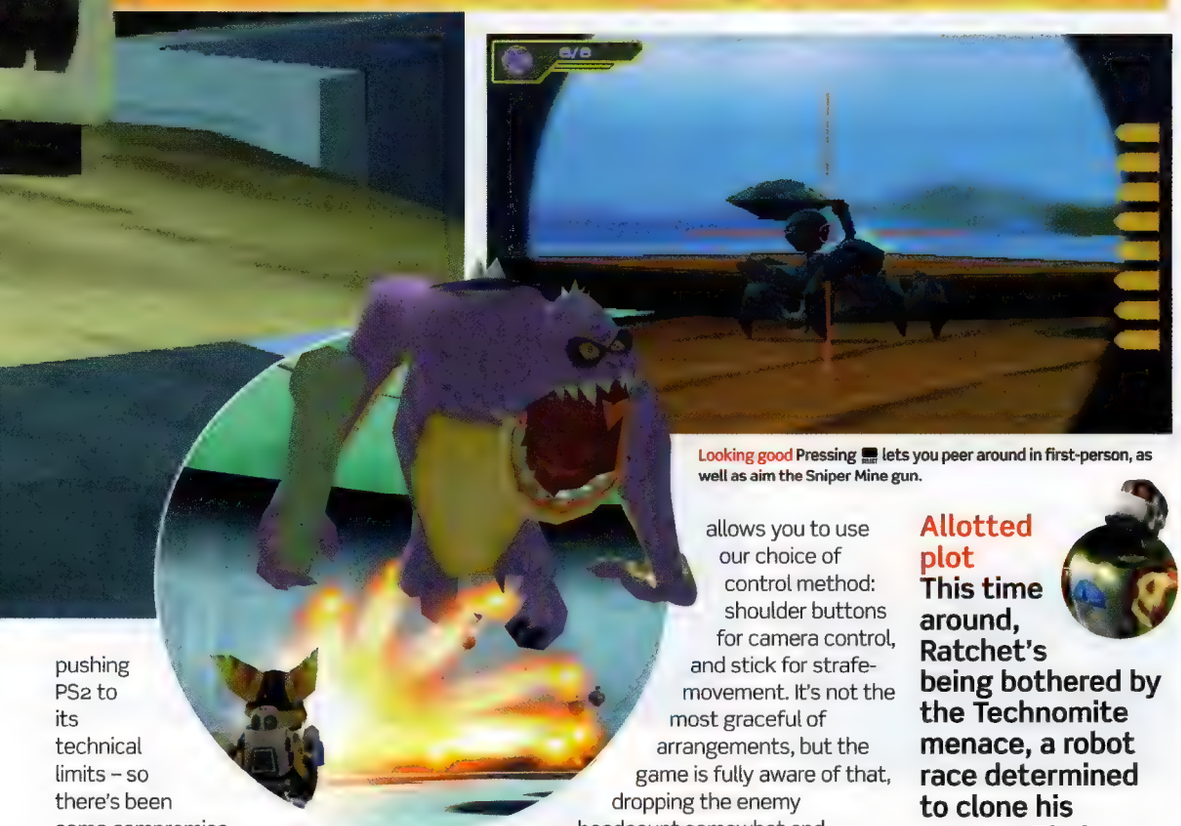
Job's a (mostly) good 'un

Size Matters is a saucy little slice of programming indeed. It always had one hell of a job ahead of it – the *Ratchet* games now thrive on the use of both analogue sticks, as well as





Ammo nation Need more ammo? Enemies will drop bullets, but smashing crates is your best bet.



Looking good Pressing lets you peer around in first-person, as well as aim the Sniper Mine gun.

pushing PS2 to its technical limits – so there's been some compromise in terms of intensity and design, but it's all still wrapped up in plenty of flair. Seriously, so few other games on PSP are this slickly programmed and you can bet your whole arse that it won't be the last time you'll be seeing High Impact Games working hand-in-hand with Sony.

The first thing you'll notice, however, will be the controls. *Size Matters* offers a compromise, but it's making the best of what's there – you can use the D-pad to strafe and stick to move, or vice versa, but the setup also allows you to use our choice of control method: shoulder buttons for camera control, and stick for strafe-movement. It's not the most graceful of arrangements, but the game is fully aware of that, dropping the enemy headcount somewhat and breaking things up into snack-sized set-pieces with more variety than its PS2 relations (especially the rat-tat-tat repetition of *Ratchet: Gladiator*). It's a sensible approach, but it's still best to be prepared for some moments of frustration, especially since some checkpoints can feel somewhat unforgiving.

The first thing you'd expect to notice, however, is the weapons – the true stars of the series. And they're pretty damn good, wavering from the dependable but dull twin machine guns through to the recognisable Suck Cannon and Acid Bomb Glove, to the more bizarre offerings, such the insect-puking Bee Mine Glove. Your armoury never feels as flexible as in, say, *Ratchet And Clank 3*, but what combat's on offer is made a little more dynamic by having the camera trail Ratchet from a lower and closer angle.

Allotted plot

This time around, Ratchet's being bothered by the Technomite menace, a robot race determined to clone his powers. Their secret weapon? A sweet little schoolgirl with a camera...

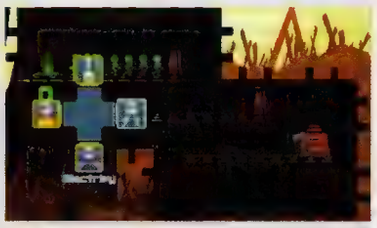
Ratchet And Clunk

What comparative chaos the gunfights may lack is compensated for in two ways. The first is in the imagination of the game's stages, which is a highlight for the entire series – Dayni Moon, for example, is set on a farm with murderous robotic sheep and a day/night cycle that flicks back and forth every minute or so. Plus, you'll be journeying into Ratchet's head for a rather barmy trip through his psyche, as well as shrinking yourself down to blast your way through a miniaturised world. Second, you've got a greater selection of minigames and tasks ahead of you,

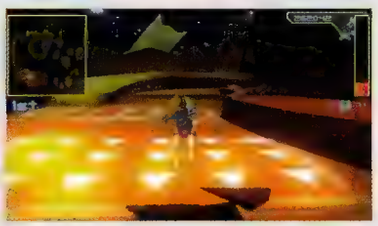
Minigames

It's a mini adventure

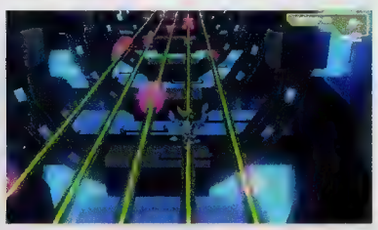
As well as blasting and platforming, there's this...



Clank Arena Battle other bots, Robot Wars-style, or guide little machines through puzzling 2D stages.



Hoverboard Races These are too long and the controls skittish, but they offer some neat rewards.



Grindlocks Instead of your usual 'hacking', you open sealed doors by grinding a series of rails.

Protection

Armour-gettin'

Like Barbie, but for boys. And with guns

A new addition to the *Ratchet And Clank* universe is the welcome ability to mix and match your own sets of armour, choosing helmet, gloves, chestplates and boots from a selection of 28 different components. There are seven different types of armour to clothe yourself with – Wildfire, Sludge, Crystallix, Electroshock, Mega-Bomb, Hyperborean and Chameleon. Choosing all your armour pieces from just the one type has a bonus effect, but there are good number of cross-breeds offering extra benefits, up to a total of 13 in all. We reveal nine of them here, keeping the remaining four for you to uncover yourselves – after all, you wouldn't want us to reveal all of *Size Matters*' secrets before you've even begun, would you?

All Wildfire parts Sets fire to any enemy that touches you, while any wrench attacks will also engulf the enemy in flames.

All Sludge parts Coats enemy bullets in a sludge that weakens them, as well as soaking your wrench in corrosive goo.

All Crystallix parts Offers great protection, and sends out a powerful wave when Ratchet hits the ground with his wrench.

All Electroshock parts Even better protection, and sends out a shocking wave when performing a ground slam with the wrench.

All Mega-Bomb parts Offers 84% damage reduction. When it starts glowing, you're reading to unleash one hell of a melee attack.

Wildfire gloves, Mega-Bomb helmet, chest and boots Superheats the wrench, meaning your third swipe in a combo becomes extremely powerful.

Crystallix chest and gloves, Electroshock helmet and boots Has a good chance of zapping projectiles out of the air, provided enemies aren't too close.

Sludge helmet, Wildfire chest, boots and gloves Performs a hyper-strike with the wrench, and a bubble of vicious sludge is released over a small area.

Electroshock chest and boots, Sludge gloves, Wildfire helmet Perform a hyper-strike, and three waves – acid, fire and shock damage – fire out.

Gun shopping New weapons can be bought from Gadgetron vendors during each stage.

Skills 'n' skins Meeting certain criteria earns Skill Points, which unlock cheats, while collecting hidden Titanium Bolts open up new skins.

although the quality of the entertainment these provide can vary somewhat (see 'It's a mini adventure').

The manner in which the main game is broken up with one-off sections is often imaginative – dodging lines of swirling blades in a deathtrap corridor or sprinting away from a combine harvester through a cornfield – but they have a habit of feeling drab and can often teeter into the realm of busywork. The best (or worst) example? One special weapon allows you to guide saplings about and plant them in nearby sandpits with varying effects; a humdrum requirement indeed. Ditto Clank's on-foot sections – where he commands a selection

Ratchet & Clank

"Beautiful, frantic explosions... an eye-to-brain feast that very nearly justifies the outlay itself"

Clank on it Clank is strapped to Ratchet's back as ever, but his solo sections aren't a patch on simply blazing away with massive guns as Ratchet.

Second sights Finishing the game unlocks Challenge Mode, with more powerful weapons.

Jumping suits Long jumps, high jumps and hovering glides are possible, but not often vital.

of bots to do his bidding – which are just as dull, if charming, as they were in the PlayStation 2 games.

Shooting star

Despite all that, it's always luxuriously realised, with some superb animation and a visual quality that hits the benchmark set by PSP's most handsome games. And it's a great package, featuring everything you'd expect from a *Ratchet* game, from the swanky cut-scenes through to replay-worthy Skill Points, to Wi-Fi multi-player rucks and buckets of upgrades to unlock. Not to mention the shooter sections starring Giant Clank, which are largely strategy-free but showboat the handheld's visual potential with a swirl of beautiful and frantic explosions, an eye-to-brain feast that very nearly justifies the outlay for any tech-whores out there.

Yes, *Ratchet* PSP It may have its issues, but *Size Matters* proves that High Impact Games are definitely Downsize Masters. At least on a par with *Daxter* and pretty much a vital purchase.

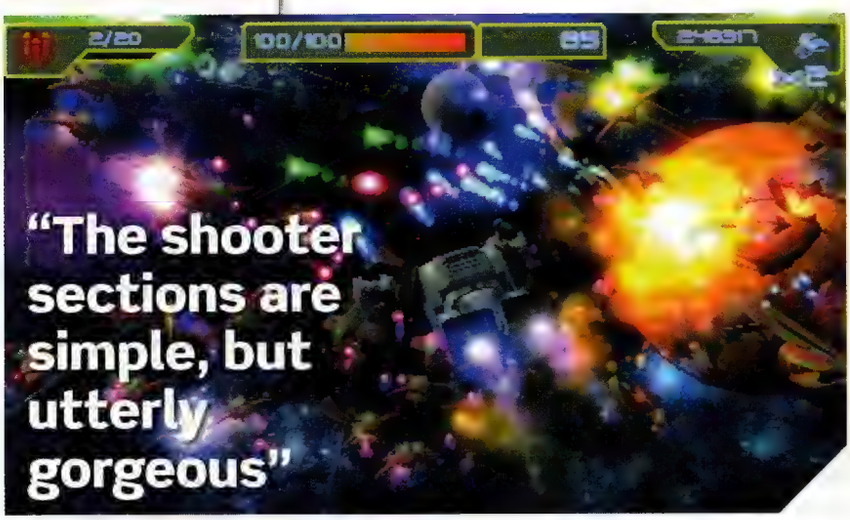
Steve Bailey

Multi-tasked

Size Matters offers multi-player for up to four, from Deathmatch to a game involving collecting bags of meat. On the moon. Yes.

Little by little The game's obviously not as big as PS2 *Ratchet* games, but the UMD still brims with content.

Fave Feature



PSM3 Verdict

***Ratchet & Clank: Size Matters* contains...**

Tons of imagination | Some dull tasks and minigames | The best shooter sections on PSP

Overall Not small and not perfectly formed, but packs a wicked punch. Accomplished, but stops short of brilliance.

86

Pub EA | **Dev** EA Big
Price £50 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player 1-6

ON THE DISC
Watch *Homecourt* now
PS3/Coming Soon

NBA Street Homecourt

Polished courts, polished looks, polished gameplay

KNOW IT NOW

Gravity-defying dunks?	☑
Trash-talking players?	☑
Time for breakdancing?	☑
Feels brand new and revolutionary?	☒

If *FIFA Street* – love it or hate it, we know why it exists. Not everyone appreciates the simple thrills of football, so its bombastic tricks and high scores are an enticing implausibility. *NBA Street Homecourt* does the same for basketball, stripping the sport's dull bits bare and delivering a game we can relate to. You don't need to know the backcourt rule, to understand the meaning of *fun*.

Arguably – in a tight match – the highlights of an actual basketball game are the final seconds. One last-minute clever shot or moment of skill can outshine the previous 48 minutes of action entirely. *Homecourt* is all the exciting bits rolled into a cartoon-strip of high-paced action. An average match is packed with moments of pure genius, from the banter between players trash-talking your skills to sniper-like long range specialists hitting nothing but net from distance. Plus there's the obligatory exhibition of colourful dunks – more on these later.

Court in the act

Unlike previous episodes, *Homecourt* has ditched the vivid cartoon graphics in favour of realistic visuals polished with the next-gen EA sheen. The different venues at which you ply your trade look beautiful. There's the beachside court with its swaying palm trees and sun-licked sands, for instance, and the sports centre where the squeal of rubber on hardwood greets every shuffle of your hi-tops. Each offers their own unique atmosphere. And the solid balling and unrealistic moves make *Homecourt* one of the most stylish games on PS3. With a tap of △ or □, you can leave your opponent stunned with a trick remixer. Hold L1 or R1 when you hit the tricks button and you'll be able to modify your moves to keep your combos fresh. This is essential because the *Homecourt*'s all about building your Gamebreaker meter.

The Gamebreaker is activated by hitting △ in the centre of the court when the meter is full and flashing. The music launches into Herbie Hancock's hip-hop classic, Rockit, and your regular through-the-leg tricks are replaced by outlandish breakdancing moves. Mix up combo moves enough and you can go to phase two of

NBA Street Homecourt

"Run up the back of your team-mate and slam the ball home. You'll be The Man"

Not so Melo Denver Nugget's star player, Carmelo Angelo, finds out the hard way that showboating players are floored with a tap of Ⓐ. Ouch.

Phat flips The outrageous dunk styles look amazing. You can end up chewing concrete, though.

Handling charge Hold on to Ⓐ or Ⓡ and you'll slow down dribbles. Tap them and you'll speed up.

PSM3 BUY IT

your Gamebreaker meter and add extra points to an otherwise standard score. It's simple and easy, and body-popping around the court looks great, but the music does get a little irritating after the hundredth time. Other flaws? Few, but the *Homecourt* Challenge, which makes up the Career mode, in which you take on people from other 'hoods and recruit new players for your team, gets repetitive fast.

Touching up

There are lots of nice little touches. Running up the back of your team-mate before slamming the ball home is rewarding. Passing the ball mid-dunk to all of your team as they glide through the air is better. But the top move is holding Ⓡ down, hitting the critical end of the dunk meter and watching as your player powers the ball through the hoop, off the floor, back into your hands and through the hoop again for a multi-scoring move. It makes you feel – however briefly – like The Man.

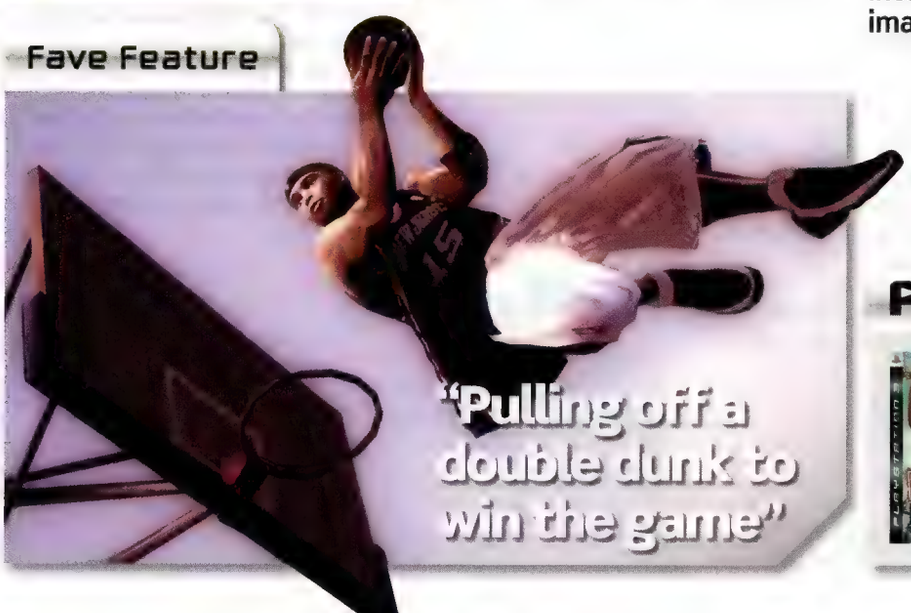
Made man

By EA's standards, Create-A-Character mode is poor. Rather than make your own player, you morph famous NBA faces into one unique image. Strange.

The game feels as polished as the hardwood floors you play on. You get stylish spoken-word biographies from the game's stars about how they started out and the funk and soul soundtrack is a welcome departure from the indie-themed EA Trax of late. There are even a few licensed ladies in there; a first for *any* official EA sport's title.

NBA Street Homecourt isn't going to squeak everyone's sneakers, but even the most ardent basketball haters will find something to get excited about here. One of the most enjoyable sports games available on PlayStation 3. **Nathan Irvine**

Fave Feature



"Pulling off a double dunk to win the game"

PSM3 Verdict

***NBA Street Homecourt* contains...**

Dribbling | Incredible dunks | Fouling
A surprisingly cool soundtrack

Overall Don't worry about not 'getting' B-ball – this is more of a showing-off sim, and a fun one at that.

80

Pub Sony | **Dev** NaNaOn-Sha
Price £30 | **Release** Out now (import)
Multi-player 1 - 2

ON THE DISC
We'll review Parappa on the disc next issue

Chop suey Chop Chop Master Onion teaches Parappa martial arts so he can beat up Sunny's boyfriend, Joe Chin.

Beat bullies Freestyle to increase your score and you'll hit the 'cool' rating, the hip-hop Holy Grail in *Parappa*.

Parappa The Rapper

This old PSone rhythm-actioner has the tunes, but not the staying power

Parappa, a rapping dog, has the hots for a girl with a flower for a head called Sunny Funny. The trouble is, she's already going out with someone – a rich, narcissistic jock called Joe Chin. Undeterred, Parappa embarks on a musical quest with his friends PJ Berri and Katy Kat to win her affections. Hasn't Coronation Street taken a strange turn recently?

No, sorry, our mistake – we're describing *Parappa The Rapper*, one of the best rhythm-action games ever made, ported directly from PSone and squeezed into a tiny UMD. Sure, we'd have liked some new songs, but it's been ages since we've played this and it's just as compelling – and unforgivingly difficult – as it was in 1998.

It's simple, really – your instructor, be it a kung-fu onion or a reggae-loving frog, gives you a series of instructions in the form of a rap, which you must copy exactly and in precise time with the music. Each line of the song slides across a bar at the top of the screen, represented by a face or shoulder button, and all you have to do is press the corresponding button as it appears on the screen. But that's how amateurs play *Parappa*. If you want to go the extra mile you can 'freestyle' – throw in extra phrases and rhymes – to reach the 'cool' rating and earn your teacher's ultimate respect.

Know your onions

The music's fantastic. Chop Chop Master Onion's infamous rap ("Kick! Punch! It's all in the mind!") is a blast, as is Prince Fleaswallow's slow-burning reggae number, where Parappa uses hip-hop to sell junk at a flea market. If your rapping stinks and your timing goes off the music slows down and your instructor starts to lose faith in you, but earn a 'cool' ranking and they'll often bugger off, leaving you to rap on your own. So in that respect it's more than just a *Dance Dance Revolution*-style button-basher, as the levels can change depending on your performance.

But it's too short. Why didn't they thrown in *Parappa The Rapper 2*? Or even guitar-based spin-off *Um Jammer Lammy*? Probably because they want to release them all on their own and make more money. This means, though, that you'll spit your way through the six songs on offer in less than an hour, and, although there's incentive to beat your high score, it's disastrously limited. In fact, read a review of the original in an old games mag and they'll be complaining about the same thing.

It's an absolutely perfect concept and unbelievable fun while it lasts, but *Parappa The Rapper* just doesn't have the staying power to be an essential purchase. The PSP conversion boasts sharper visuals, wireless multi-player battles, widescreen support and the ability to send a one-level demo to another PSP, but that's hardly enough to make *Parappa 2007* more than a simple remake.

Andy Kelly

Bog standard **In the fifth stage you have to rap against all of your teachers to skip a toilet queue. Obviously.**

Bad move If you hit the 'awful' rating and continue to miss each beat during Parappa's driving lesson with instructor Mooselini, he fails.

PSM3 Verdict

***Parappa The Rapper* contains...**
Flying toilets | Hip-hop cookery | An onion with a moustache | Driving lessons from a moose

Overall A fantastic game, but a short, limited one. Not really worth the asking price, and not as good as *Gitaroo Man*.

75

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Pub Codemasters | **Dev** Arte Piazza
Price £35 | **Release** Out now
Multi-player None

ON THE DISC
We'll have *Harvest Moon* on the disc next time

Woman trouble Be nice to the ladies and they might fall in love with you. Wedding bells will chime.

Things to see and do The island is a beautiful place, and there's lots to see and loads of places to explore.

Harvest Moon: Innocent Life

Can you help a cucumber-farming robot discover the meaning of life?

KNOW IT NOW

A robot that slowly turns into a boy? ☑
Chickens coming home to roost? ☑
The first game to make agriculture fun? ☑
Hardcore stabbings and gunfights? ☒

Harvest Moon is an entirely peaceful, sweet-natured, slow-paced role-playing game that's all about what it means to be alive, rather than – like most games – what it means to be blown apart by a hand grenade to a really 'now' soundtrack by The Automatic. You till soil, sow seeds, water crops and sell your non-GM, additive-free produce to the market. Later on you keep cattle and buy a bigger watering can. It sounds really boring. It *should* be boring. But it's not.

And that's because it's both undeniably charming and a little bit mental. For instance, you may look like a small boy, but you're actually a robot – a robot who must learn what it means to feel love through the nurturing of pumpkins. The manual actually says you're neither a robot nor an android, but the fact is you have to visit the professor once a week for maintenance... hardly a human habit, and if he's simply tightening your nuts something's very wrong. Which it's not. We hasten to add.

Nutty professor

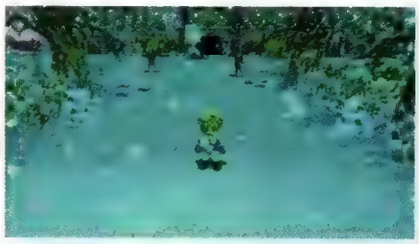
The professor lives in a small town that's nevertheless entertaining to explore – it's not bustling like, say, Liberty City, but it's well-stocked with entertaining characters such as the loon in the lighthouse, the school mistress and the owner of the local store, all of whom you'll actually get to know. There are also a few ladies who may well find you charming... our tip is Sharon. She's definitely up for it.

The farming's pretty detailed – seasons and even the weather make a difference to what will grow or survive, and somehow the frailty just draws you into caring about how well it does. Weeding and removing rocks/branches is also surprisingly enthralling as smashing them up can create valuable resources – cash might be revealed, and you'll have more valuable land. And later, the professor gives you a modified battlebot to do this stuff for you. It can still, at times, be a little too painstaking, but there's still plenty of time to do other things.

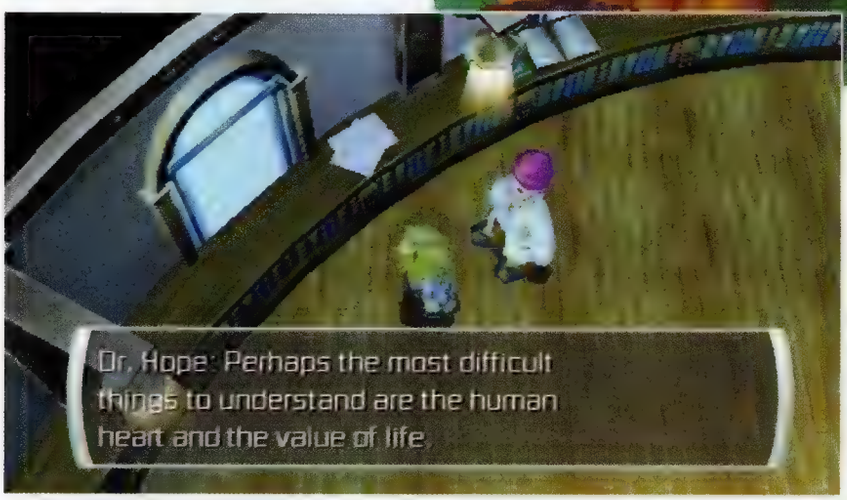
These aren't aimless, either – exploring the island reveals much that's interesting. Firstly, you find the coloured crystals you need to unlock sealed-off fields in various, slightly spooky, caves and towers. Placing four same-coloured crystals in the altars at the field's corners removes the seals. And obviously, more land for you means more crops, which means more money for tools and seeds. These fields have been sealed

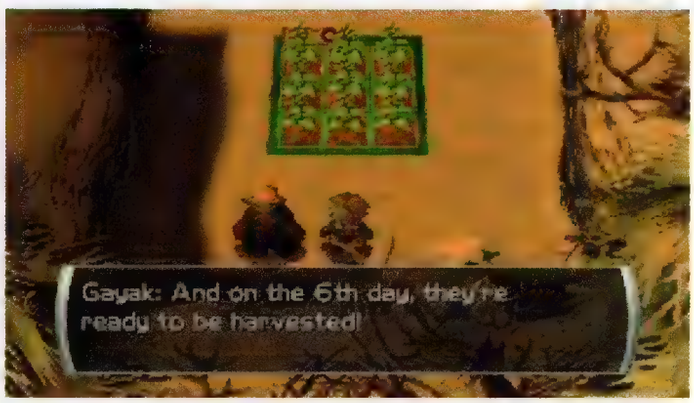
Harvest Moon

"We blew our first paycheck on a water pistol, then got excited buying a hammer"



Seasonal change The weather changes across the game year, which affects the crops you can grow.





off, incidentally, after the island's nature spirits took offence to the humans being at war – as they were in the past – and sealed off much grassland as punishment.

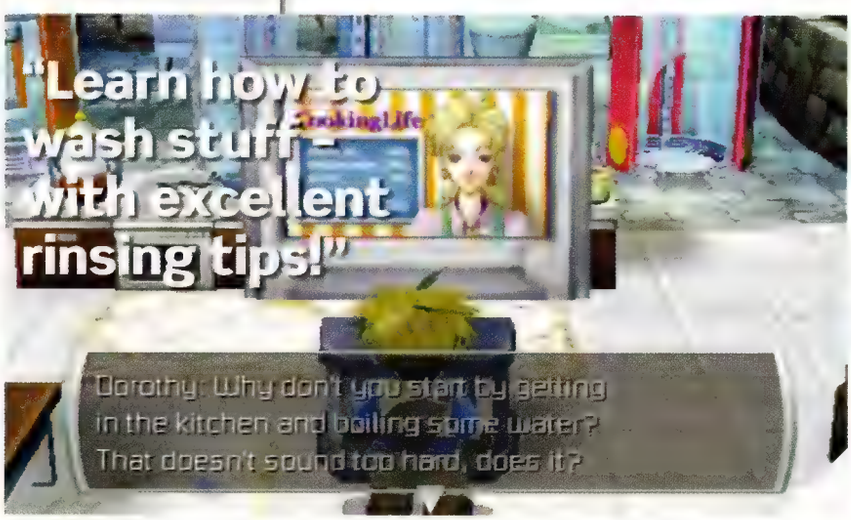
The second thing exploring reveals is just what's going on. The lighthouse weirdo, Neo, is convinced the nature spirits are still angry and that the entire island is set for destruction. It *is* built on a volcano, after all. Essentially, your journey towards humanity – you have a stat for this along with your other personal skills – unlocks the secrets of the island, rescues the people and saves the land itself. Lovely.

Engine trouble **Though it moves oddly, it's weirdly fun to be shown around town in an open-topped car.**

The long way round

If anything, it can be just a bit too nice and a bit too slow. Movement is fine, and if there's really nothing to do you can go to bed and hasten time on, but it still takes hours – *Harvest Moon* won't be rushed. Yet, with a warm-hearted tale that stays the right side of cutesy and, somehow, really fun – we blew our first paycheck on a water pistol, then spent ages getting excited about saving for a hammer – that's not a bad thing. It's just nice to take your time occasionally. **Steve Williams**

Fave Feature


"Learn how to wash stuff – with excellent rinsing tips!"
Dorothy: Why don't you start by getting in the kitchen and boiling some water? That doesn't sound too hard, does it?

PSM3 Verdict

***Harvest Moon: Innocent Life* contains...**
Your very own strawberry fields | Proper weather | An eco-friendly message

Overall It won't convince some, but the more open-minded will revel in these calm, cheerful, engaging fields. Gorgeous.

85

PS2

Pub Take Two | **Dev** XS Games
Price £20 | **Release** April 6
Multi-player 1-2

ON THE DISC
The Red Star will be on the disc next time out
PS2/Reviews

The Red Star

After a *three year* delay... Acclaim's shooter rises to defeat mediocrity

KNOW IT NOW

Mech boss battle overload?	☑
Big beat-laden soundtrack?	☑
Flashbacks to coin-op nirvana?	☑
Actual coin-op nirvana?	☒

For a while the bankruptcy of Acclaim in 2004 was the best thing that ever happened to *The Red Star*, the shooter-cum-brawler based on Archangel Studios' sci-fi comic book series. The longer it floated through limbo, waiting for some sympathetic publisher to reach in and pull it back out, the greater its reputation grew, many now seeing the game as some kind of last hurrah for no-nonsense arcade gaming. The last two years have in fact been so kind that, ironically enough, one of the *worst* things that could have happened now for *The Red Star* was for someone to actually *release* it, turning the legend back into a mere videogame.

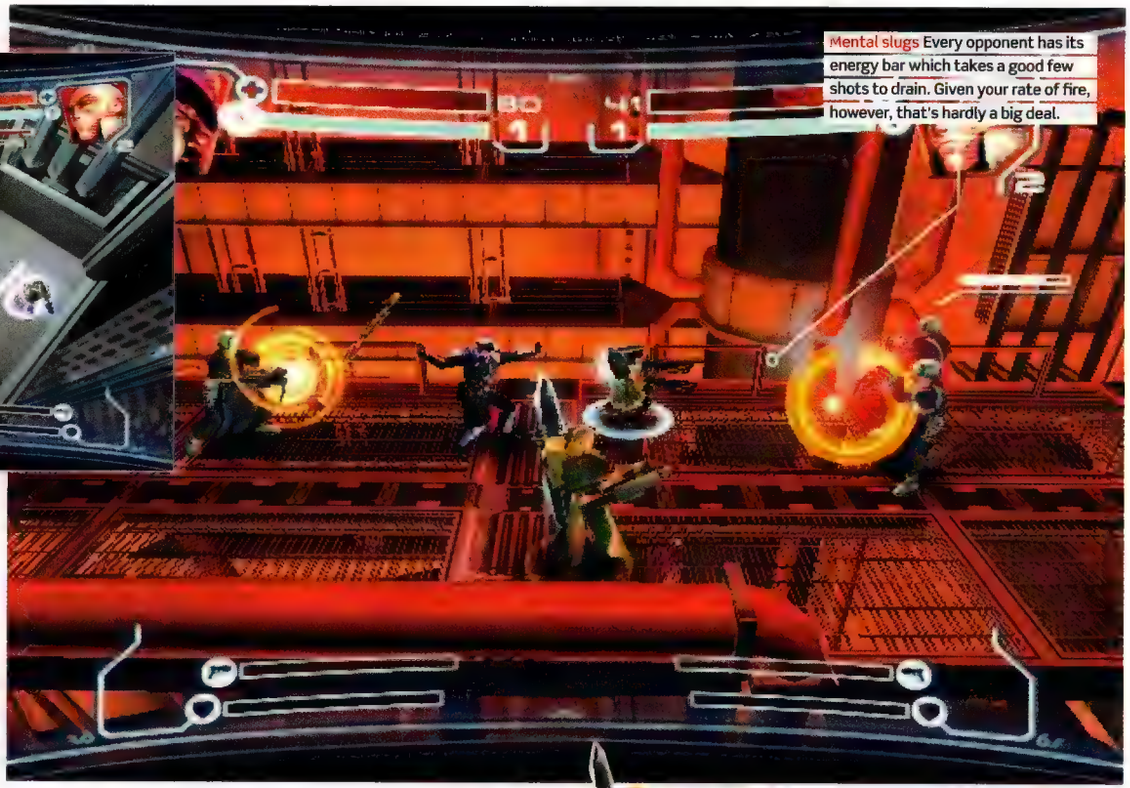
On paper, there's little not to like – or even love. Set in a post-war, alternate reality Russia, it's a clash of industrial might and magic that twists Steampunk into something slightly different – let's call it Snowpunk. A fictional war between the URRS (United Republics Of The Red Star) and nearby Al'Istaan, analogous to that of the Soviet Union and Afghanistan, brings together elements familiar to anyone who's played the likes of *Contra*, with towering mechanised bosses, brisk close quarters combat, and barely negotiable bullet patterns. There's also, however, a great deal of melee combat in the mix.

Stars of the East

Three characters have been drafted in from the comics: the burly Kyuzo, the agile Makita and the sorceress Maya. Only the first two are available before your first game completion, while each has a fighting style and weapon payload tailored to their basic strengths. Shop visits between levels, meanwhile, provide a range of optional upgrade paths: a marksman might choose to focus on improving the range, power and heat dissipation of the game's rifles, a brawler might prefer melee skills, endurance and 'Protocol' special attacks, while recipients of enough S-class rankings might earn the luxury of mastering all these skills at once.

And they may have to, given the balancing isses that afflict *The Red Star*'s second half, steepening its difficulty curve into a wall. In a genre tradition that stretches as far back as *Robotron*, its difficulty lies not in fending off individual enemies, each of whom succumbs quickly to a button-tap combo or sustained volley of fire, but in defeating particularly arranged waves of them. An artillery soldier might hang back, for example, and pepper

Red steel Bosses come in umpteen variants, time and time again. Each has a unique name and mode of attack.



Mental slugs Every opponent has its energy bar which takes a good few shots to drain. Given your rate of fire, however, that's hardly a big deal.

the play area with mortar fire while the larger brutes, with their electrically projected riot shields, close in to catch you unawares. A boss, meanwhile, might throw footsoldiers in amongst its bullets and beams, drawing your fire from its weak spot and luring you into harm's way. It's all about distraction in this game and, for a brief period halfway through, when it stops being too easy and has yet to become impossibly hard, it works extremely well.

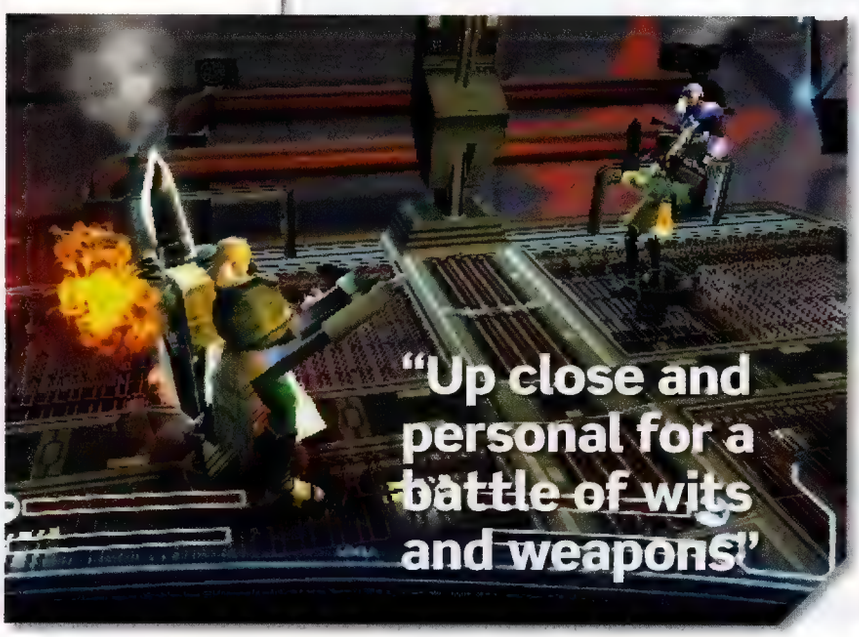
Red mist

Were it a less numbing experience, you might even accept *The Red Star* as being hardcore to a fault, or something equally generous. But it's remarkably low on character for a comic book adaptation, and neither is it the most arty of shoot-em-ups. Were it not for the falling snow, jargon-tastic mission briefs and anime portraits of its leading characters, it'd be hard to differentiate it from the crowd of import shooters that, had it actually arrived on time, would have been the competition. There are modest moments of brilliance – a neat visual touch here, a memorable set piece there – but the relentless march of polygonal war machines and soldiers becomes harder to appreciate as the game goes on, despite its efforts to keep things varied. As the difficulty ramps up to controller-chucking levels, there's even the suspicion that the game is having more fun than you are, spitting out ever more elaborate spreads of bullets and freely experimenting with spawn points and enemy formations, but losing that all important sense of control.

Twin cannons The strategic implications of *Red Star*'s two player mode are surprising, the onus suddenly being placed on you to flank the opposition, rather than vice versa

Full of big noise and energetic combat *The Red Star* is certainly a pleasure to begin with, when you can almost sleepwalk through it. But that first crushing moment when you lose your single life – when the game's coin-op trappings and lack of checkpoints come rushing back to haunt it – is the moment you realise that the reality of the game was never going to live up to the legend. A hot topic for a while, it can still be a cold war. **Duncan Harris**

Fave Feature



PSM3 Verdict

***The Red Star* contains...**
Little sense of the source material
Moments of near-greatness | Technical polish

Overall Worth 20 quid? For no-nonsense arcade thrills, just about. Worth two years' wait? Sadly, not quite.

71

Pub Activision | **Dev** Amaze
Price £30 | **Release** Out Now
Multi-player 1-6

ON THE DISC
Roads To Victory is on the DVD this month
PSP/Latest

Call Of Duty: Roads to Victory

A partial victory for first-person shooters on PSP

You might well be familiar with *Call Of Duty* by now – it's wartime, planes scream over your head, bombs explode in the distance and bullets zip past your face, forcing you to cower behind a pathetic piece of rubble whilst you simultaneously wonder quite how you're going to advance on that enemy half-track or make a break across no-man's land.

Sadly, given the lack of a right analogue stick to look around with while moving, PSP doesn't exactly have the most friendly controls for first-person shooters. *Call Of Duty: Roads To Victory*, for the most part does its best, adopting the familiar approach of mapping the right analogue stick to the face buttons, but it's fair to say this remains a crude compromise. *Roads To Victory* tries to help with a lock-on targeting system, which varies in accuracy depending on the distance of your target. It's a godsend, if still slightly hit and miss, but you start to feel yourself getting sucked into the frantic fire fights, desperate skirmishes and spectacular set pieces – like massive helicopters crashing to earth – that the CoD series is famed for.

Set pieces are captured perfectly, although obviously not on the same scale as *Call Of Duty 3* on PS2 or PS3. The battlefields and missions are smaller, as you'd expect, and you have less allies fighting by your side. Room for complaint is small, however – after all, this is an entirely new set of missions spread out over three campaigns across different locations – you'll fight the Hun alongside the Americans, the Canadians and the British. There's replay value here for the hardcore too – earning gold medals via the Veteran setting takes some doing – play on this difficulty for the first time and you'll be scythed down within seconds. After a few goes you'll do better, but it's still incredibly – but not unfairly – hard.

Broken boy soldiers

There are problems, though. The enemy AI is patchy at best, so soldiers tend to charge out into the sights of your machine guns without a moment's thought. Then there's the issue that enemies feel as though they're coming towards you as if on a conveyor belt, spawning endlessly from rather innocuous looking small houses, and the vehicle parts are naff. Baddies also fall through solid walls when shot. The controls, meanwhile, although helped by the lock-on, always feel slightly inaccurate and awkward.

Roads To Victory is fun, atmospheric and walks all over the likes of *Coded Arms* – but feels fundamentally betrayed by the controls of Sony's handheld. PSP's finest hour? Only in flashes. PSP's best first-person-shooter? Definitely, but given the opposition, it's a hollow win. **Martin Saint**

Plane silly This is what *CoD* is all about; planes thundering overhead and tanks smouldering at every turn.

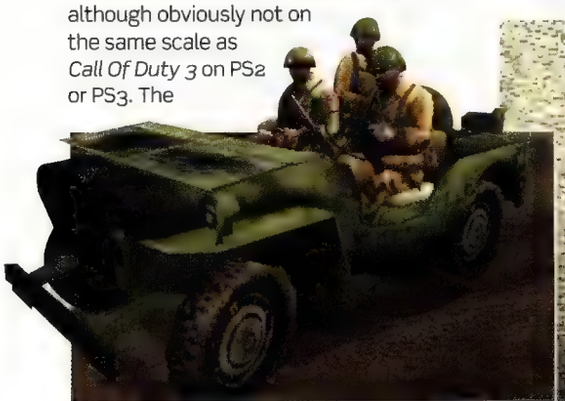
The sounds of war
The sound is very effective – the explosions and screams of your men really add to the atmosphere

PSM3 Verdict

***Call Of Duty: Roads To Victory* contains...**
The essence of war | Spectacular action and sound | A sensible control system

Overall Good set pieces and decent controls, but minor flaws mean it wins a battle, not the war for PSP shooters.

70



Brad sit You don't just run around shooting – there are bits when you get to sit down and shoot as well.

Lock on, Tommy Bang, you're dead. The lock-on makes things a lot more forgiving than the majority of handheld shooters.

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PS2

Pub EA | **Dev** EA
Price £30 | **Release** Out Now
Multi-player 1 - 16

ON THE DISC
Vanguard will be on the disc next month
PS2/Reviews

Bridge the gap Using cover is second only in importance to firing your rifle. Step into the open and you're done for.

Team America Your squadmates call out useful advice. Here they yell, "Sniper in the window! To your left!"

Medal Of Honor Vanguard

Simpler, more streamlined and better than before

Medal Of Honor: European Assault was way too complicated. All that rhubarb about 'open battlefields' and adrenaline (which made you invulnerable for a few seconds) just got on our nerves. But *Vanguard*, and we don't say this often, is a welcome step *backwards* for the series. It's classic *MoH*, linear, simple and tactical – a cheese and pickle sandwich to *Call Of Duty*'s walnut and stilton focaccia roll. The combat is measured and slow-paced: you dart from cover to cover and take control of the battlefield inch by inch, just as you would in a real war. We, er, would imagine.

The game follows the adventures of the 82nd Airborne, a brave lot who helped capture Sicily from the Italians and parachuted directly into Germany towards the end of the war. There's some semblance of a plot but it's pretty inconsequential, serving only to set the scene than craft any kind of driving narrative. As ever, the levels are all based on real battles – namely, operations Husky, Market Garden and Varsity in Italy, Holland Germany respectively. It's refreshing to shoot someone other than Nazis for a change. The first mission sees you slotting Italians, for instance. Radically different, we know. The objectives are comprised of assaults on Nazi strongholds, blowing up tanks and planting charges on AA guns. It's all a bit predictable and it's been done a hundred times before but it's strangely endearing, a good old-fashioned FPS without any sodding vehicle sections or ruddy rhythm action minigames.

Dull but adequate

Shame it's so drab, though. The levels are bland and featureless and the textures are so flat they might as well not even be there. There are some nice bits – the parachute drops for example, which boast gorgeous sunlight effects and draw distances – but it really does look awful and it'll put a lot of people off. But don't be a graphics-obsessed fool because *Vanguard* is rather good. Some of the set-pieces are raucous, thrilling affairs, with bullets clattering all over the place and shells exploding. It's also got some of the best battlefield screaming we've ever heard – the desperate, echoing cries of the Germans is enough to give you nightmares.

Band of brothers
The AI is so clever, you get sort of attached to your squad. You *might* even weep when they die.

Vanguard isn't a very *exciting* game. It's just a good one. But it's too short. There are only about ten levels and you can easily finish it in a day, leaving it feeling a bit like an expansion pack to a bigger, better game. In some respects it is, because the forthcoming *MoH: Airborne* on PS3 features the same locations and missions, only with a different main character and, obviously, next-gen innovations. *Vanguard* is like a warm-up for the *MoH* series' return to form Well, we *hope* it will be. Rent this and wait for the shiny PS3 version. **Andy Kelly**

PSM3 Verdict

***Medal Of Honor Vanguard* contains...**
Men in tin hats | Squeaking tanks | The jarring sounds of war | Awesome parachute drops

Overall A good old-fashioned FPS. It looks scrappy and it's short on innovation, but the combat makes up for it.

73

FAST car

DON'T DRIVE
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ON SALE : 11/04/07

ON THE DISC
See the *Tekken 6* trailer on the disc now
PS3/X360

Sony | PS3 | out now

Tekken: Dark Resurrection

Tekken hits PS3's download store in style

As downloadable games go, there are few that can say they're as complete an experience as this. The depth and variety on offer in this deluxe edition of *Tekken 5* is superb. We say 'deluxe' because not only is this the PSP version – which featured an extra two characters – but it's also been given the 1080p hi-def treatment and had its loading times reduced too.

Tekken it on

But it isn't quite PS3 quality. Textures are incredibly sharp, but are lacking detail up close and the character models are blocky and flat in comparison to *Virtua Fighter 5*'s stunning combatants. Ironically, the extra power of PlayStation 3 has made all the game's last-gen shortcomings stand out like a black eye on a fighter's face.

Of course, this is only natural as this is, after all, 'just' a reworked version of an old game. But *what* an old game it is. The fighting is as smooth and fluid as ever, with moves as easily-accessible as they were on PSP, with all the game modes – including Time Attack, Survival and Arcade – intact in this new game. Playing again has made us remember just how good it is. As a cheap download, we can't do anything but recommend it. It's not going to keep you from *MotorStorm*, but it's something you'll always keep going back to for one more go. **Team PSM3**

PSM3 Verdict

A fighting classic to download and keep returning to.

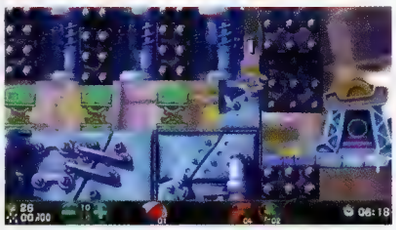
84

Generation game The backgrounds look lovely, but can seem a bit on the empty side of things.

Sony | PS3 | Out now

Lemmings

They're back, and still walking off cliffs



Quelle surprise – one of the oldest, most ported titles the world has ever known has ended up on PlayStation 3's download service. But while you could be forgiven for thinking this is just going to be yet another straight port, think again. The aim is the same, yes – guide your lemmings over a series of course full of traps – but this is actually a super-deluxe version of the suicidal rodent-saving puzzle game. The lemmings themselves have been beautifully animated, and a quick press of △ lets you zoom in and out to see what they're up to. You can even clearly see the objects they carry once they've been assigned, which is a neat touch.

Add to this the fact that there are now pick-ups offering extra items to use and you're actually looking at an almost-new Lemmings experience. But the key word there is 'almost', because let's be honest here – you're not really looking at anything revolutionary with this game. It's very old-fashioned, very familiar and very frustrating – much like it ever was, then – but at least you can still enjoy blowing up all the lemmings for fun. Suicidal, are they? Let's see if we can been them to it... **Team PSM3**

40

Sony | PS3 | Out now

Super Rub'a'Dub

This can duck right off

Hello – is that the sound of barrels being scraped? Yes, PS3's 'rubber ducks in a sink' tech demo has been turned into a downloadable game. It's quite endearing at first, mind, as you tilt the Sixaxis to guide your duck and collecting baby ducks, before guiding them safely to the plughole. The wind-up shark enemies are cute, but eat your little duckling followers – so shake the pad and capsize them.

But the duck-related puns ("Quacked it" and "Billiant", anyone?) soon start to lose their appeal, much like the rest of the game,. The Sixaxis control feels inaccurate, although it's not helped in that you're trying to guide the unguidable (water), with a motion sensitive pad. As a result, the maze-like tubs are either too easy – in compensation for the controls, presumably – or way too hard. Everything seems too far away and the ducks are just tiny, so the physics don't come across as impressive as they undoubtedly are.

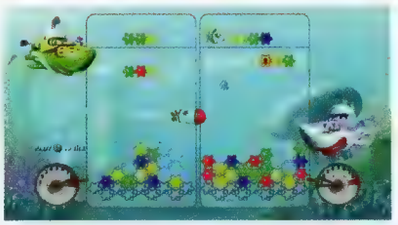
Seeing your rank in the world displayed after each effort is bound to keep some people trying obsessively to better their scores, but... well, basically, this ducks. **Team PSM3**

50

Sony | PS3 | Out now

Go! Puzzle

Every new launch needs a half-arsed puzzler



How many different variations on *Tetris* and *Columns* can there actually be? Here you get another couple of mundane block-matching games called *Swizzle Blocks* and *Aquatica* – both of which are best left alone. However, the third game is much more novel and interesting. It's called *Skyscraper* and you basically have to navigate a series of towers as a yellow spaceman by walking or jumping through each floor, choosing a coloured path and sticking to it. Clear an entire colour and you get five seconds extra –screw up and you get through but with a tighter time limit next time out. It's a great idea, sadly let down by three major things. Firstly, you can't restart from the pause menu, so once you've made a mistake, you have to wait or quit out and go back in again. Secondly, the name-entry screen is gimmicky and pops up after virtually every attempt without actually remembering your name. And finally, the music is terrible. It's actually worse in the other two games, but all three 'tunes' will make your head feel funny. It also looks basic like primary school maths. So while *Go! Puzzle* works well in places, it ultimately feels like the cheap download it is. **Team PSM3**

64

PSM3 Download guide

How to get all these games from the Store

1) Go to the PlayStation Store

Get your PS3, log on with your username and click over to the Store via the cross-media bar. Here you'll see downloadable games, demos, movie trailers and all sorts of stuff.

2) Choose your title

Everything's displayed in alphabetical order, so its easy to browse with just a few button presses. Or you can take a look at the Featured Items. Highlight what you want, and a click adds them to your cart.

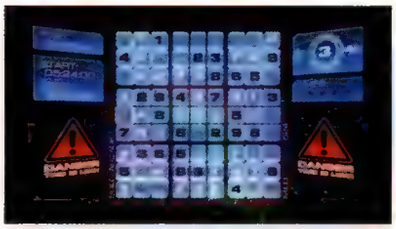
3) Buy and enjoy

Go to the checkout and click 'Buy'. Then the credit card you used to sign up for your user ID will be charged, an email receipt sent and your game will download in the background, while you do something else.

Sony | PS3 | Out now

Go! Sudoku

Yes, just go, *Sudoku*. Just go...



Oh... christ. It's Sudoku. You know, that number-filling game that everyone went crazy for a couple of summers ago. You remember? Stick digits on a grid until every column and row uses the numbers one to nine? You've got it. And now you can play it on PlayStation 3. Seriously, now, if you've bought a PS3 and actually want to play *Sudoku* on it, there's no hope for you. Especially as a pen is the best method for inputting numbers on a Sudoku grid, far more so than a joypad. Worst thing of all? This isn't even a particularly *good* version of Sudoku.

The background tries so hard to be next generation it simply ends up putting you off or making the numbers too hard to read. As if the bloody thing wasn't difficult enough already, eh? There are three skill levels and plenty of puzzles to play through – and there may be more to download later, you never know with online games – and they do get increasingly tricky. The number input method uses the shoulder buttons to change digits and you get three lives in the main mode in case you get one wrong. That's as exciting as it gets. This is *not* the future. Leave well alone. **Team PSM3**

39

Sony | PS3 | Out now

GT HD Concept

A tantalising taste of the future

Given that *GT HD* is free, and possibly over a year away from the finished game, you can't read *too* much into the score. On the good side, it's *Gran Turismo*, it's on PS3 and it's free – hence, an essential download. It's also got a Ferrari in it, which automatically makes it 534% cooler. On the bad side, the single track you get – Eiger Nordwand – is pretty featureless and feels like you're racing in the middle of nowhere. How typical of Polyphony for its showcase demo to be so understated... it's like a Sunday afternoon drive. It does have lots of hills and bumps – and a lovely view of the Eiger – but it's also criminally easy – any decent gamer will be beating the set times with each car by 15 seconds once they've driven the course a few times. Therefore the ten cars (and tuner versions) will be yours in about half an hour, along with Drift mode, in which you earn points for, well, drifting. There's no actual racing in *Concept* – it's just you against the clock.

But despite all these disappointments, once you start trying to beat your best times, you'll still play it for ages. Online rankings are the icing on this outwardly bland, but ultimately rather tasty cake. Play this, then imagine a full-fat, challenging version with, of course, actual racing in it – plus a year of extra development. Excited? You probably should be. **Team PSM3**

84

Sony | PS3 | Out now

Blast Factor

Not the thieved idea you think it is

What at first appears to be a blatant rip-off of Xbox Live Arcade's *Geometry Wars* turns out to be PS3's first essential download. At heart it plays similarly to Bizarre Creations' classic shooter, with the left analog stick moving your craft and the right firing in an independent direction. But it's got some neat tricks up its sleeve that elevate this beyond simple mimicry.

For starters there's the *Every Extend Extra*-esque explosion system, which allows you to destroy many enemies with one shot as their explosions chain together. Then there's the Sixaxis implementation, which lets you tilt the gameworld and create a shockwave that pushes enemies to the side of the screen for easy blasting or, better still, upturns armoured cells and exposes their underbellies.

Add in a snazzy skill-detecting difficulty system which gives you tiered routes through each level depending on how well you play and you've got a brilliantly balanced score-attack game. It looks lovely too, although the bonus stages can get SFX-happy to the point where enemies are hard to see. But that's all that's wrong. This should be your first Store purchase. **Team PSM3**

85

Sony | PS3 | Out now

flOw

Life begins on PlayStation 3

Ever wondered what it would be like to be a microscopic life form, swimming around under a microscope lens? Well... now you can. This is life at its most basic level – recreated on PlayStation 3.

It's refreshing to see something as different as this. In fact, this is so different, it isn't like a game at all. You start life as a water nymph-like being. You have a mouth of sorts and a tail. And as you start tilting the Sixaxis, you realise you can swim. So you do. And you start to feed on tiny red organisms scattered around the play area. And then you feed some more. As you eat, music notes play and lights start to glow along the length of your tail.

Yo, evolution

As you progress through layers of primordial soup (by eating red things, of course), you grow bigger. There are beautiful life forms all around you and you can eat them by putting out their own lights. Consume what remains and you grow bigger. At the end of each section, you leave your body behind and take on an entirely different form.

It's all essentially pointless, but at the same time totally mesmerising – and you'll soon have no idea how long you've been playing for. The graphics are superbly stylish and look surprisingly like microscope footage you see on TV science programmes. We did see some slowdown, but it seems harsh to nit-pick when a game is just so very... haunting.

As a game, it's very limited. But as a PS3-only experience, we wholeheartedly recommend you try it. Dim the lights, turn it up, and go with the *flOw*. **Team PSM3**

PSM3 Verdict

Mesmerising and beautiful. Just excellent.

82

Mouthy git The sickle shape is your mouth. You'll do a lot of eating... there's nothing else you can do. Apart from swim and look pretty.

Sony | PS2 | 13 April

Everybody's Tennis

But does everybody want it?

Everybody loves *Everybody's Golf*. But will the same formula make *Tennis* a game everyone will enjoy? Well... almost but not quite. You see, it really is exactly the same formula as before. It's cute, certainly, with likeable characters (many of whom return from *Everybody's Golf*), but while plinky-plonky piano music works nicely for a golf game, it's too laid back for the fast, hard-hitting action of the court. It's just too... Sunday afternoon.

Child's play

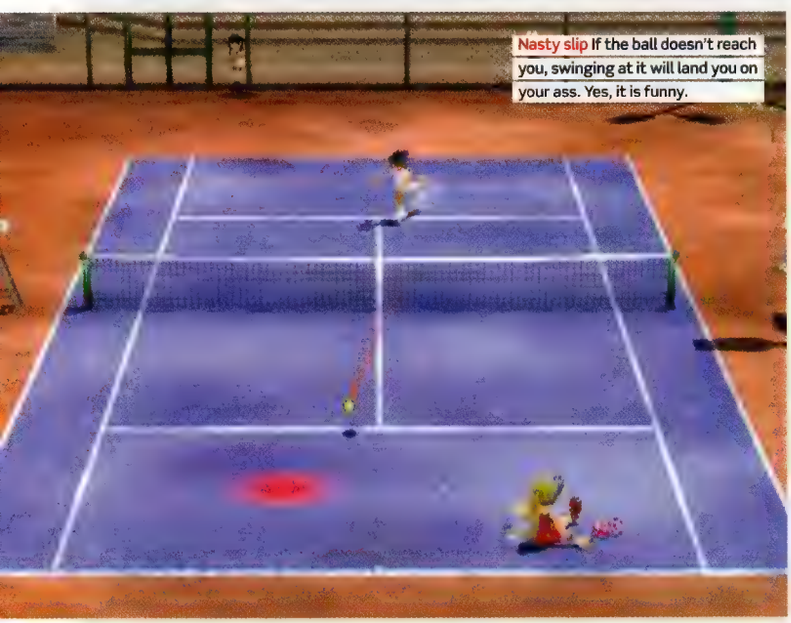
Also, in a bid to appeal to everybody, the difficulty level is down to 'kiddy'. After taking one game to get used to the controls, we didn't lose another for hours. Of course, this doesn't matter in multi-player, but with so much of the game needing to be unlocked, giving up a few hours of your life to get more characters without being stretched at all can feel shallow. But it's no chore – this is a charming game. Learning how to hit good shots is fun, and the cartoon noise bubbles – which say 'dink' or 'rustle', like in *Everybody's Golf* – are hard not to smile at.

Graphically, it's rock solid and mostly appealing despite the basic looks, although the realisation that Yelena's grin is identical to Leisure Suit Larry's did put us off a bit. There are some nice lighting effects, though, and the camera work is great, with well-directed cutaways and replays of your finest shots.

This is a very old-fashioned videogame, but a fun one all the same. Sadly, it's just too easy – but a worthwhile companion game to *Virtua Tennis 2* all the same. Most enjoyable. **Justin Towell**

PSM3 Verdict

Cute, accessible and fun, but lacking oomph. **75**



Activision | PS2 | Out now

Pimp My Ride

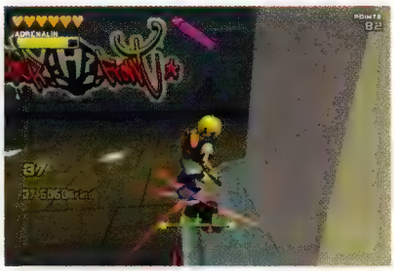
Thankfully, not featuring Tim Westwood

Based on the show of the same name, Pimp My Ride has finally spawned a game. Unfortunately, the magic that makes this car modifying programme so popular has been lost. Curiously, the real stars of the show – the blokes at West Coast Customs – aren't here. Instead, you drive around the fictional city in unresponsive cars. The actual modding bits are repetitive bemani minigames and little else and, while there's some fun in 'ghost riding the whip' – where a driver gets out and dances alongside his slow-moving motor – it all looks awful. This is one ride not worth taking. **Nathan Irvine** **31**

Midas | PS2 | Out now

Skate Attack

Better than a heart attack, but only just

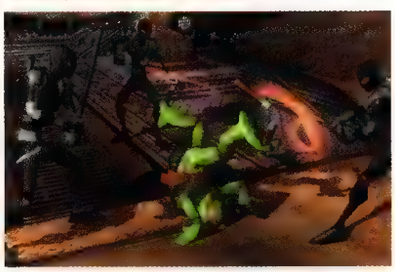


Remember *Jet Set Radio* on Dreamcast? It was a skating game that combined two of hottest fads of the early noughties – extreme sports and cel-shading – to great effect. The *Jet Set* comparisons here stem from the day-glo colouring and the combat element of the gameplay, as not only have you to score points with tricks, you have to bash various floating robots that have kidnapped your pal. If this sounds like dribble fashioned into a kid's *Tony Hawk*, its because it is. Sure it has manuals and a reasonable control system, but with only 30 different tricks, it all gets hateful. **Dave Harrison** **42**

Ubisoft | PS2 | Out now

Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles

Turtles, with added 'attitude'



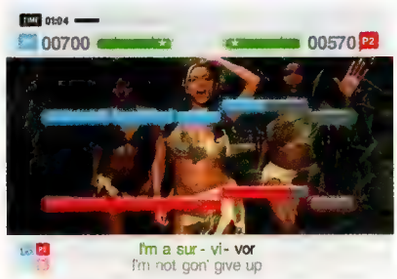
Released, predictably, to coincide with the new CG Turtles film, this is, slightly less predictably, *quite* good. Konami have lost the license and it's now in the hands of *Prince Of Persia* men Ubisoft Montreal. And a lot of The Prince's moves have been transferred to the 'heroes in a half shell' including running along walls and flipping over enemies' heads. The levels are occasionally very pretty and the combat is satisfying (if simplistic). But it's still no *God Of War*. Unimaginative level design, creaky collision detection and an overall lack of polish hold it back. Shame. **Andy Kelly** **56**

Sony | PS2 | April 27

SingStar Pop Hits

Sorry, didn't this come out last month?

At the moment, it seems like there's another *SingStar* in the shops every other week, each one almost identical – apart from tracks – to the last. New things here? Well they've tacked on a chart system, which is basically a high-score table in, well, a chart format. Oh, and the 30 tracks contains artists such as Akon, Fall Out Boy, Girls Aloud, James Morrison, Lily Allen, Razorlight, Orson [spit], Corinne Bailey Rae, Scissor Sisters, Will Young and U2 to name but twelve. Same again, then, but it's still the post-pub game of choice and a welcome stop-gap between PS3's ultimate *SingStar* with its downloadable tracks and wireless mics. **Nathan Irvine** **71**



PSM3 Recommends

The best games from the last few months

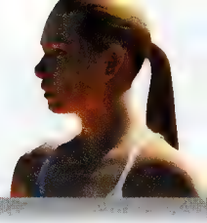
God Of War 2
Sony | PS2
"Like running eyes-first into a wall of beauty, *God Of War 2* is yet another of PS2's last-minute masterpieces. Absolutely captivating throughout. Get it."
PSM3 Rating 93%

Okami
Capcom | PS2
"Quite brilliant, with substance enough to live up to its stunning visuals. Peaceful, elegant, you'll play it for hours. The most beautiful game on PS2
PSM3 Rating 95%

Virtua Fighter 5
Sega | PS3
"Technically flawless, the result of over a decade's evolution and perhaps the best scrapper ever. But *Virtua Fighter 5* is such an acquired taste."
PSM3 Rating 87%

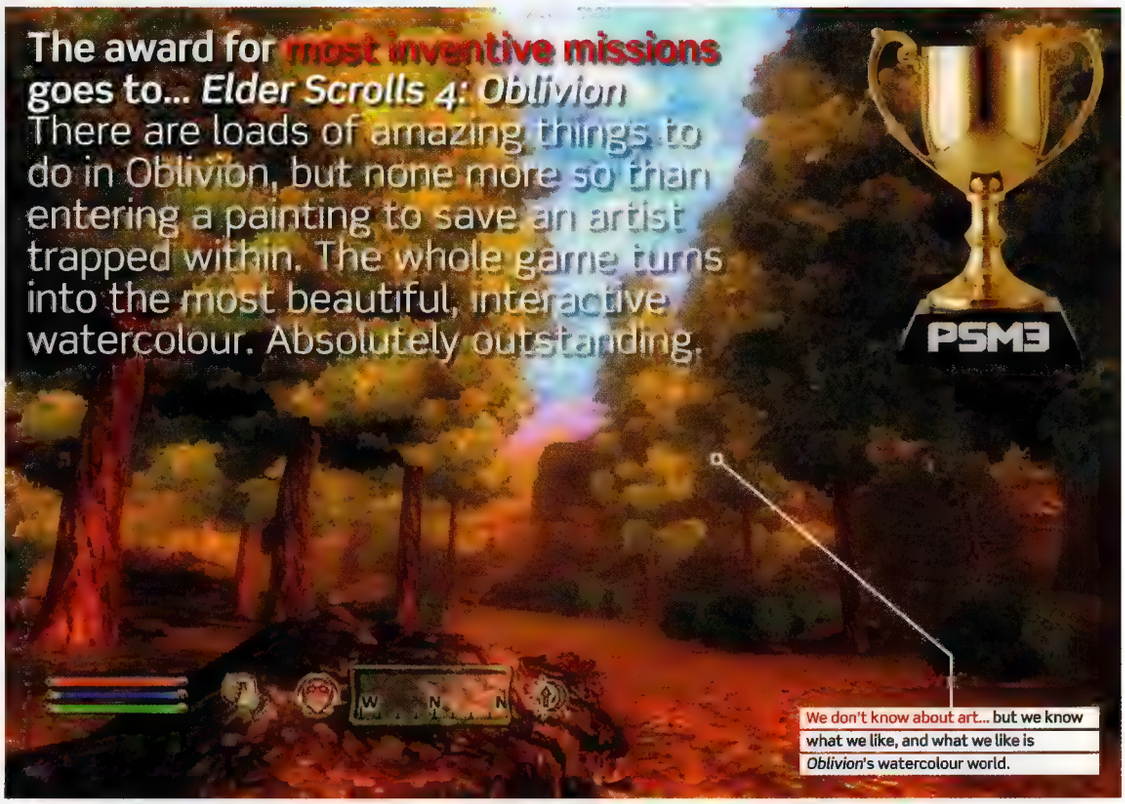
Virtua Tennis 3 PSP

"Clothing occasionally vanishes in the match end sequences..."



PSM3 Awards

The highlights (and lowlights) of this month's reviews


The award for most inventive missions goes to... Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion
There are loads of amazing things to do in Oblivion, but none more so than entering a painting to save an artist trapped within. The whole game turns into the most beautiful, interactive watercolour. Absolutely outstanding.
PSM3
We don't know about art... but we know what we like, and what we like is Oblivion's watercolour world.

Sega | PSP | Out now

Virtua Tennis 3

The very first PS3-to-PSP conversion

Amazingly, *Virtua Tennis 3* on PSP is just like the PS3 version. But it comes at a price. Yes, the ball physics are just as good, the minigames – like dodging giant tennis balls to improve footwork – are inspired and the game will keep you occupied for ages in single or multi-player. But it's stretched to breaking point. The graphics, while hugely ambitious, are very glitchy – overlapping objects flicker and disappear, with the bizarre result of clothing occasionally vanishing in the match end sequences. Hello, Maria...

The momentary game-freeze from *VT: World Tour* has thankfully gone from the end of each point, but is sometimes presents itself as players make shots instead, making you think the point is over when it isn't. It's also very easy. We won the Arcade tournament on our first try and World Tour only gets challenging after about two hours' play. Load times are typically long, too, although battery life seems longer than usual.

Despite the niggles, this is still the usual brilliance, and definitely worthy of your love. **Justin Towell**

80

Crave | PSP | May 25

Dave Mirra BMX Challenge

It's certainly challenged...

This is a dull BMX game, scuppered by a fiddly control system and bad collision detection. It's got tricks, races and large, free-roaming environments, but it's just so flaky. It's a shame, as the presentation is decent enough, with some nice looking menus, and there aren't exactly loads of BMX games out there. But with *Tony Hawk* already doing a decent job on PSP, why would anyone go for this more awkward two-wheeled equivalent?

Dave falls off his bike convincingly enough, with some good ragdoll effects, but when it keeps happening time and again and you *know* you avoided that curb this time, you'll be reaching for something – anything – else very quickly. And why do other bikers always perform the same tricks at the start of a race? Is that scripted to make the game look good? Probably, yes.

It's derivative, dull, dark and probably loads of other 'D' words too. So don't do it. Unless you breathe Dave Mirra and have an irrational love of terrible games. You don't, right? **Justin Towell**

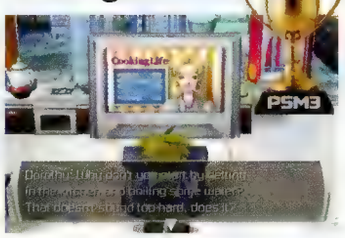
35

The gender equality award goes to...

NBA Street Homecourt

Finally, an EA sports game with actual women in it. And about time too. Maybe this can get more girls to play games. Maybe.

The domestic bliss award goes to...



Harvest Moon

It's odd that cutting up wood and doing the washing up is so dull in real life, but in *Harvest Moon* it's a joy. Who can understand?

Buyer Beware! The games they're afraid to send us

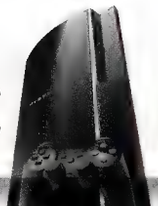
Harley Davidson: Race To The Rally Activision
"Experience the camaradarie" of Harley Davidson brotherhood. No, thanks.

Spectral Vs Generation Midas
Mmm, another 2D beat-'em-up, this time with characters from Japanese RPGs. We bet this still isn't as good as *SF2*, but then, what is?

Hi-Score Table

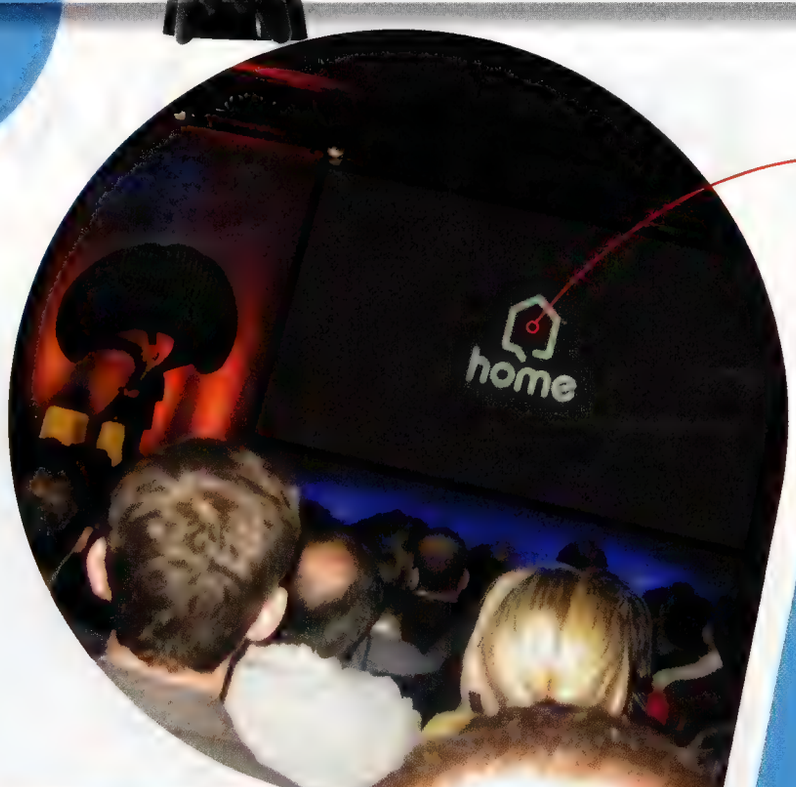
☐	Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion	p54 93%
☐	Ratchet: Size Matters	p60 86%
☐	Harvest Moon PSP	p68 85%
☐	Blast Factor	p77 85%
☐	GT HD Concept	p77 84%
☐	Tekken: Dark Resurrection	p76 84%
☐	flOw	p77 82%
☐	NBA Street Homecourt	p64 80%
☐	Virtua Tennis 3 PSP	p79 80%
☐	Parappa The Rapper	p66 75%
☐	Everybody's Tennis	p78 75%
☐	Medal Of Honor: Vanguard	p74 73%
☐	SingStar Pop Hits	p78 71%
☐	The Red Star	p70 71%
☐	Call Of Duty PSP	p72 70%
☐	Go! Puzzle	p76 64%
☐	Teenage Mutant Turtles	p78 56%
☐	Super Rub'a'Dub	p76 50%
☐	Skate Attack	p78 42%
☐	Lemmings	p76 40%
☐	Go! Sudoku	p77 39%
☐	Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	p79 35%
☐	Pimp My Ride	p78 31%

PSM3 at GDC



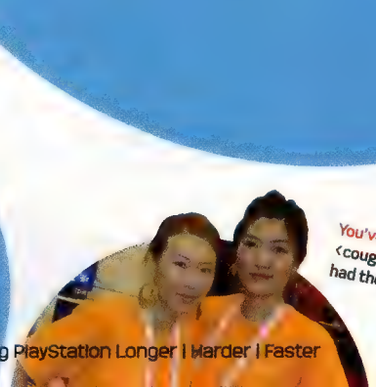
PS3

Snack attack This is what they serve for lunch at GDC. It's free, true – but frankly, it shows in the taste. Bleurgh.

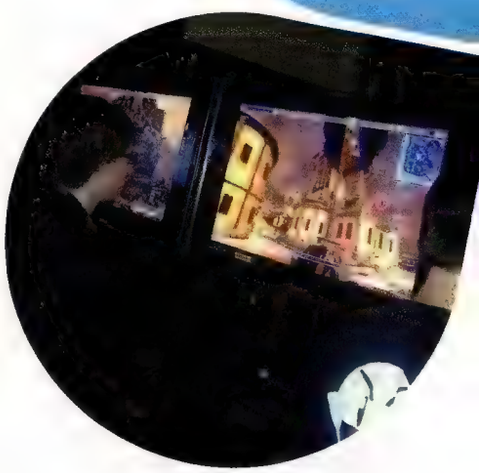


Welcome, *Home* Phil Harrison introduces *Home*. The massed ranks of the games industry are about to be surprised.

Home ranger Is this the future of online gaming? Only time will tell, but it's certainly something to be excited about.



You've got female E3 gets loads of <cough> Booth Babes. GDC just had these two. Swizz.



THE FUTURE OF PS3 AT GDC

PSM3 wows to PS3's hidden power at the Games Developers Conference... plus in-game *Killzone 2* footage

Although often thought of purely as an event for people who make games to get together and discuss frighteningly techy-sounding things like 'visual C++' and 'frostbite rendering architecture' – as well as for lectures on game-making, for mobile phone games companies to hire massive stands that everyone ignores and for PC companies to show off their complicated software packages – there's more to the Games Development Conference than that. Although not open to the public (it's for the games industry and press people only), there's often a great deal of PlayStation-related news at the event – and this year there was more than most.

Sony had a large presence at GDC this year, held from March 5-9 in San Francisco's Moscone Centre, and they *needed* to have a terrific show to claw back some goodwill from a public embittered by a PS3 beset by delays, backwards-compatability issues and a price tag perceived as prohibitive. The keynote speech from SCEE's Executive Vice-President Phil Harrison couldn't just be good, it needed to be *great*. Then, over in the show hall, their stand – almost right next door to the ludicrously-popular Nintendo exhibit – simply *had* to draw in the punters. And, with the launch of the excellent-looking online service *Home* and the well-received *Little Big Planet*, they kind of succeeded – but not to the degree that we'd hoped.

Read on for more on that, the peculiar unveiling of the latest *Killzone 2* trailer, the thoughts of the PS3 development community and exactly what we learned about dynamic leaf-lighting effects. Oh, and the future of *LocoRoco* – which was possibly the most exciting thing we saw all week. The happiest game ever just got happier. And fluffier...

P's and queues This is the massive queue of people waiting to get into the hall for Phil Harrison's keynote. Popular man, our Phil.

PSM3's GDC Verdict

A solid effort, but PS3 is only getting started...

On reflection, it was a good – but not stellar – event for Sony. Online networking lobby *Home*'s an exciting idea with loads of potential – see our '20 Games that Shape the Future of PS3' supplement for more – making new friends from around the world and taking them on at basketball, bowling and any number of other games sounds terrific, and Hall Of Fame has the potential to be as important to the PS Network as Gamerpoints are to Xbox Live. However, original as streaming your movie files onto virtual TVs and cinema screens may be, are people really likely to do that over watching them on their proper TV? We doubt it. And while there will be a significant minority who'll adore *Home*, many may not bother after a cursory once-over. There are lots of folk who just don't care about online gaming and we're not sure this will change things.

Then there's *Little Big Planet*. Immediately arresting visually, it was demonstrated perfectly. The two guys from Media Molecule displayed the 'create a level' aspect well, placing trees, oranges, footballs and stickers everywhere with simple button clicks, and the four-player co-op/competitive collect-'em-up demo looked tremendous fun, with the four characters flying all over the place on jetpacks, beating each other up and launching into the air on a giant skateboard. And the promise of being able to share your levels online sounds highly appealing. But will creating *good* levels really be so simple?

Will people bother?

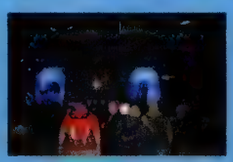
The demo was intense, and if it takes more than a few minutes to make something similar, many won't try. Still, the uproarious reception and show floor buzz went a long way to repairing Sony's recently-battered reputation for risk-taking and innovation.

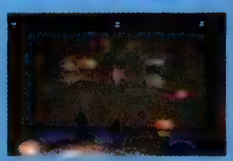
Killzone 2 wasn't seen by the masses – Sony were using journalists to gauge public reaction – and there were no other big attractions on display. Still, it's primarily an event for developers, and Sony's bold unveilings are to be lauded – even within the office, we're more optimistic about PS3 than we were after the so-so launch line-up. That's the key – balancing the necessity of solid formula games, with experiences like *Home* that defy standard description. And where the two extremes meet, that's when PS3 will really get going...

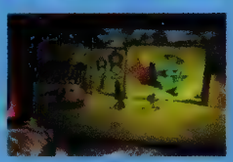
Zip and tuck The *LBP* zip-up fellas may well take PlayStation 3 by storm.

PS3's Coming Home

We were present for Phil Harrison's speech. Here's what went down...







The crowds in the Moscone Centre were going mad for *LBP*.

March 7, and we're inside the Moscone Centre's massive South Esplanade, waiting for Phil Harrison's keynote speech. In typical Sony style, bleeding-edge music is playing: mash-ups of Nirvana mix into Missy Elliot, Queens Of The Stone Age... it's like being inside the soundtrack to *Burnout*. Meanwhile, two massive footballs are being chucked around by the crowd at goals stationed at either side of the stage, while Sony men act as keepers. The left side of the crowd is Team A, the right is Team B. Team B wins. Naturally, we're in Team B.

Game 3.0

Enough of that, though. Big Phil is arriving on stage. We're already aware of what he'll say, having been to a pre-GDC press preview of this speech the night before (of which much more later), but most of this crowd haven't received such special treatment. Some polite applause later, and the giant screen – flanked by huge PlayStation logos – flickers into life to displayed the words 'Game 3.0'. This is Phil's pet phrase for the 'third generation' of games, whose dominant feature, he says, is "active connected communities". It's all about putting "the power back into the hands of users". And he proves what he means by this in unveiling *Home*.

Home

You can read all about *Home* in the supplement that comes with this very mag, but in summary it's this: an online world in which you can design your own realistic-looking character, chat with friends, create your own apartment to live in, watch game trailers and movie footage via *Home* Cinema, play multi-player games like pool and bowling, and see the trophies you unlock in games in the Hall Of Fame – think Xbox Live's Achievements. Everyone around looks suitably impressed, if not blown away, but from PSM3's perspective it looks exciting – the first easily accessible 'social networking' game on consoles, a bit like PC's *Second Life* without the fiddliness of PCs. There's no doubt it's not for everyone, but we can equally imagine others losing themselves in it forever.

Little Big Planet

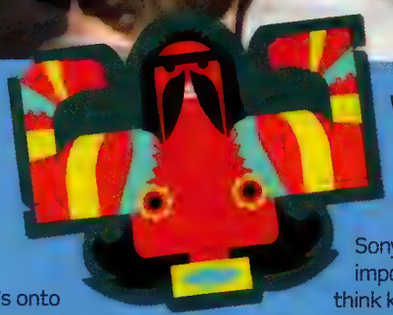
After a quick look at *SingStar* on PS3, and how downloading songs and uploading videos of your performances will work – as

"*Home* is the first easily accessible networking game on consoles. It's hugely exciting"

Grin and bear it Phil puts on a big smile after the *LBP* demo.

Good things come... The audience wait expectantly to see what Sony will deliver with *Home*.

quickly and easily as you'd imagine, with videos recorded via EyeToy or webcam – and some talk on the PlayStation Edge tools to make PS3 development easier, it's onto what Phil's clearly earmarked as the main event – *Little Big Planet*. Again, you can read far more about this in the supplement, but it looked like, in this presentation at least, the most fun thing on Earth. The little woolen sack men are the most endearing characters the next-gen has yet seen, the competition/co-operation mechanic seems to work well and the prospect of being able to create your own levels from scratch and share them online is – if it's not too complicated – is also really exciting. The crowd gets to its feet in rapturous applause, and two Americans in front of us describe Little Big Planet as "totally killer". Could this be the most unlikely of 'killer apps'? More on this as soon as we can get it.



Warhawk

And that's it for Phil's keynote. The audience seem on top of the world after *LBP*, and Sony seem to have done the impossible: made people think kindly of them. And yet there are two noticeable absentees from the speech. Two key things that Phil mentioned in his pre-GDC press briefing yesterday, but not today. Odd, but as we've been to both, it doesn't matter. First, *Warhawk*. The game's Producer, Dylan Jobe, came on stage last night to announce the game's "strategic change" – *Warhawk* is now an exclusively online multi-player game. "It will truly deliver a fantastic online war experience," he says. We got to play it afterwards and, while it's the first game in which the tilty-pad makes sense, we'd still rather play just with the sticks. Still, it looked slick and the dogfighting was reasonably compulsive. The on-foot bits, meanwhile, were OK but didn't seem like anything we hadn't seen before.

"The crowd's on its feet. Could *LBP* be the most unlikely of killer apps?""

Gone and forgotten?

PSP? Aside from its 'virtual' appearance in *Home*, you'd barely notice its presence at GDC. *Ratchet:, Burnout Dominator* and *After Burner*, among others, were present – but they were all ignored by the punters. Uh-oh. Chin up, PSP.

Killzone 2

The more important extra treat at the press briefing however was, of course, *Killzone 2*. "This is more to show the tech, not the game," said Phil. "It's to look at the complexity of the environments and the scenery." Again, see the supplement for more on this, but we thought it looked great – superb character models, ace lighting and a massive tank trundling through dusty streets. It lasted a mere 60 seconds or so, but don't lend too much credence to what you might have heard about it not looking good – it really did. Not quite up to the standards of the infamous E3 2005 trailer, sure, but still impressive. More of it will be shown at E3 in July. And we will, of course, be there to tell you all about it. Stay tuned.

Party hard Scenes like this may well be the norm wheneveryone goes online with *Home*.

PSM3 at GDC

"Dynamic leaf-lighting RULES!"

What do the GDC lectures mean for PS3 games?

It's good to talk A typical GDC lecture hall, filled with eager-to-learn game designers.

PHOTOGRAPHY IS KING

Hi-def environments?

In a lecture called Hi-Def Outdoor Environments, the Art Director of *Crysis* talks us through the graphical development of the game. The *Crysis* team went all the way to Tahiti to take pictures of leaves, you know. Then they didn't use them. Jesus. Many images of trees and terms like 'dynamic lighting' follow, but not much info on the game itself. We can't believe this wasn't called *Crysis* Talks.

COMPLEX STORY MENUS

Storytelling?

A Practical View On Interactive Storytelling was all about dialogue in games, daring to suggest that the way characters in games interact isn't *entirely* true to life – i.e. when you ask someone a question in games, they'll repeat the same thing over and over again, with no changes and with no opportunity to vary the way you ask. Solution? A *really complex* menu which allows you to alter your character's facial expressions to convey varying degrees of anger, sorrow, happiness and suchlike.

EA TAP PS3'S POWER

Sound design?

In PS3 Audio Development, game soundmen talked about PS3's sound capabilities. "Programmers are ready to unleash a ton of audio power," said Charles Deenan of EA, before confessing that in EA's early PS3 games "the only thing using the raw power was the audio". Having played *NFS*, we can't say we're surprised.

FEELINGS, NOT FEATURES

Emotion in games?

The Autobiography Of *flOw* had Designer, Jenova Chen talking on the importance of feelings in games. He proposed designing games based around gamers' feelings rather than in-game features – imagine all games being as emotionally fraught as, say, *Colossus*, and not just rigid killing sprees like *Dead To Rights*. Sounds good.

EVOKE THE PUNK SPIRIT

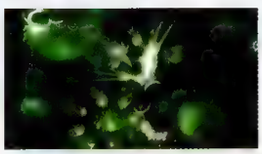
Suda 51's crazed mind?

Killer7's Suda 51 tells us his 'design philosophy'. He thinks games should be more punk – i.e. have more new ideas. "I like to do what other people do not," he said of his game starring imaginary hitmen and Morrissey. No shit?

GAMES ARE 70% ART

The world of *FF12*?

In *FF12*: A Postmorten, Programming Supervisor Taka Murata told us that 70% of the workload of the game was creating artwork and only 15% in game design. They use a program called 'Effect-Chan' to create particles to create dust effects and suchlike. Now you know.



Go with the *flOw* Designed to appeal to your emotions, this.

Honourable mentions

The seminars we didn't get to, but had 'intriguing' titles...

- Mobile Games: Are We Having Fun Yet? [Answer: no]
- Serious COTS Boggle [COTS being some sort of programming term...]
- Teaching Kids About Nutrition Through Edu-Gaming
- Understanding Emotions In *FIFA 07*
- Is There Anything Comparable To Spherical Harmonics But Simpler? [Now you're asking...]

BIG WEIGHT PROBLEMS

Sex in games?

Why so little sex in games, asked Designing The Erotic? Answer: collision detection problems. *Seriously*. "How do you support their weight? There are multiple points of contact." said Simon Strange, Designer on, erm, *Godzilla: Destroy All Monsters*. Quite.

HOW GAMES GO BAD

The *Godfather* story?

In Survival Of The Family, Phil Campbell and Michael Perry of EA spoke on creating *The Godfather*. Making EA's first free-roamer meant creating a new game engine. They admit the design was "over-scoped" (read 'overambitious'), but don't go so far as to say that the game was, in fact, a bit mince.

BETTER PS3 VISUALS

The PlayStation Edge tools?

We won't pretend to have understood everything said in Presenting PlayStation Edge, but Sony's Mark Cerny and Vince Diesi – we misread that as 'Vin Diesel' in the brochure and got a bit sad when we turned up – spoke about "SPU and RSX utilization" – complex PS3 processing chips, those. All you really need to know is this: Edge makes PS3 easier to program, so games should be better.

EASING ART WOES

Asset creation?

Asset Creation For *Lair* saw Factor 5's Mark Teare talk about how to "use all the tools an artist has to creatively and efficiently solve" PS3 design problems. Nothing new was actually shown of *Lair*, though, unfortunately.

What the experts think

Developer opinions on PS3, *Home* and everything else...

Jason Doig, Research And Development Manager, Sony Europe
"*Home* is so vast, there's no end to the stuff we can create. The tools and tech we're pulling out now are really starting to kick in, and over the next year you'll see the results."

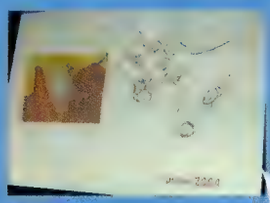
Mark Pope, Programming and Tech Director, Heavy Iron (the people behind the upcoming *Ratatouille*)
"Using Edge, we'll see a lot better games. We've got to be forward-looking. PS3's an interesting platform and we need to make better use of it."

Colin Munson, Designer, Insomniac (the *Resistance* men)
"PS3's awesome – it can do anything you've ever wanted. The limitations on PS2 were so constricted, but on PS3 there are no constrictions. I'm extremely happy."

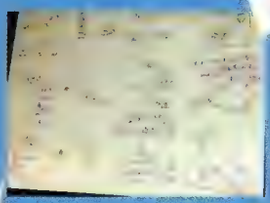
Dan Hay, Art Director on *Marvel: Ultimate Alliance*
"PS3's an interesting, challenging platform to work on. We were one of the first developers to work with it. *Home*? It's tough to be specific, but there's a lot we could do with it..."

The future of happiness

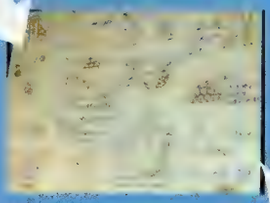
How *LocoRoco 2* almost stole GDC



The original sketch of *LocoRoco* on a PDA.



Early concept drawings of gameplay ideas.

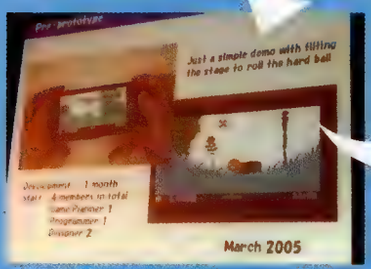


Some more fleshed out character designs.

The crown jewel of GDC's seminars was entitled A *LocoRoco* Postmortem: Putting The Happiness Back Into Gaming. Hosted by *LocoRoco* creator Tsutomu Kouno – who also worked on *Ico* – it was a look at the creation of PSP's best game, from original concept sketches through to the finished product. Kuono only speaks Japanese, mind you, so we had to wear a translation headset. Seeing a Japanese man speak while an American female translates directly into your ear is most disconcerting.

Bemoaning that "a lot of games tend to be just gorgeous movies," Kouno spoke of drawing the original '*Roco* blobs on his PDA and then thinking "maybe we can tilt the handset" to move them. And that's where the game began, with the PDA replaced by PSP and the tilt controls by the L1 and R1 buttons. Meanwhile, the 2D design was chosen because "2D is easy to understand" for the players. As he spoke, he showed slides of the game's creation, which we took snaps of. Sorry about the blurriness of some of these photos, by the way.

Other nuggets of info offered were that *LocoRoco* was pitched to Sony *three* times before it was accepted, that Kouno gets inspired by the Animal Planet channel (although which creature actually looks like a LocoRoco, we're not sure) and that the game is so named because "the repeated sound is nice". He finished up telling us that he "can't confirm which format *LocoRoco 2* will appear on, but it won't betray expectations". We know already it's PS3 – but then he showed us a slide depicting the design for *LocoRoco* mark two – and they're fluffy. And cute like puppies. And we fell in love with the game all over again. We can't wait to see more.



Early days A slide of the '*Roco* prototype. There were just four people working on the game then.

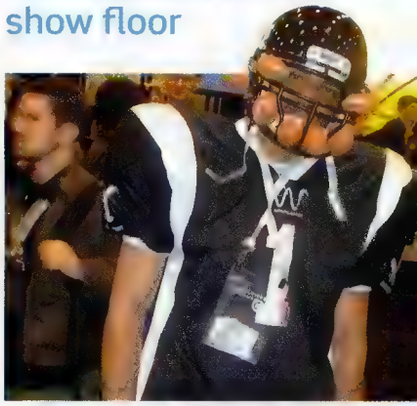
The design sketchboard for some of the baddies in the *LocoRoco* universe.

A level map, showing how the stages were designed.

Going loco It's the future – these are the LocoRoco's you'll play with on PlayStation 3.

GDC madness

The oddities on the show floor

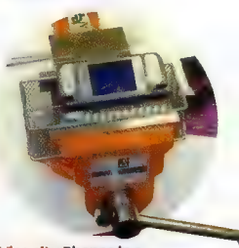


Super bawl No, we don't fancy a scrum, mate. Why are you even *here*? Who knows?

Bad ads This monitor doesn't do that, really. And, mmm, that's one classy promo poster. *Nice*.

Swearing by it We didn't get to play this, but we're praying for a PS3 conversion.

Humiliation Ah, motion capturing. How embarrassing.



Vice city Phones in a vice? Oh, it's to promote mobile gaming. Whoop.

Bodies on the line This was to publicise some PC medical software. It scared us rigid, frankly.

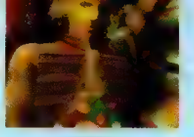
Playing PlayStation Longer Harder Deeper

Extended Play

Start

CELEBRATE

86 The most ridiculous gun in *Ratchet And Clank*
Simply move your eyes left a few inches.



GENIUS

88 The ten most amazing moments in *Final Fantasy XII*
From beautiful scenery to talking chickens.

EXPLOITS

92 The most extravagant exotic items in *Scarface*
Why not relax on a, erm, solid gold tiger?

SECRETS

94 The sad consequences of murder in *Second Sight*
Tearing apart two lovers. Feel guilty?

SECRETS

95 Hear secret sex calls in *Max Payne 2*
Plus eggs in *Project Zero 2* and *Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup.*

FACE OFF

96 Give Trevor McDonald some violent news in *Def Jam: Icon*
Show TV's anti-games 'hero' some real action

CLASSIC

98 Why looks aren't everything in *SOS: The Final Escape*
Don't let the ugliness blind you to a classic.

NATION

102 Rock 'superstars' invade Sony's PlayStation palace
Plus terrible new outfits in *God Of War 2.*

PLAYSTATION CELEBRATION

The best guns in Ratchet & Clank history

Don't let that furry face fool you. Ratchet's back pocket holds more hi-tech GBH than James Bond's garden shed. Despite the puzzles, the platforms and the slick cut-scenes, the *Ratchet & Clank* games have as much furious action as any PS2 shooter out there. With the series now inbound on PS3, it's time to take a look back and reflect on why you should be excited about it. *Resistance* proved once more that Insomniac can craft imaginative weapons and realise them slickly. Now, with that PS3 experience under its belt, things can only get better, brighter and ka-boomier. And so we present the ten best weapons from *R&C* to date, each one a reason to get all kinds of (trigger)happy about Ratchet's forthcoming PS3 debut...

SUCK CANNON

Appeared in – *Ratchet & Clank* 1 and 3
Now here's a fine invention – a gun that uses *enemies* as ammo. Smaller, ankle-nipping foes can be sucked up into it, only to be spat out as fiery bullets against any larger opposition. It's as violent as recycling will ever get, and the vortex that swirls around the barrel is one of many pretty effects.

QWACK-O-RAY

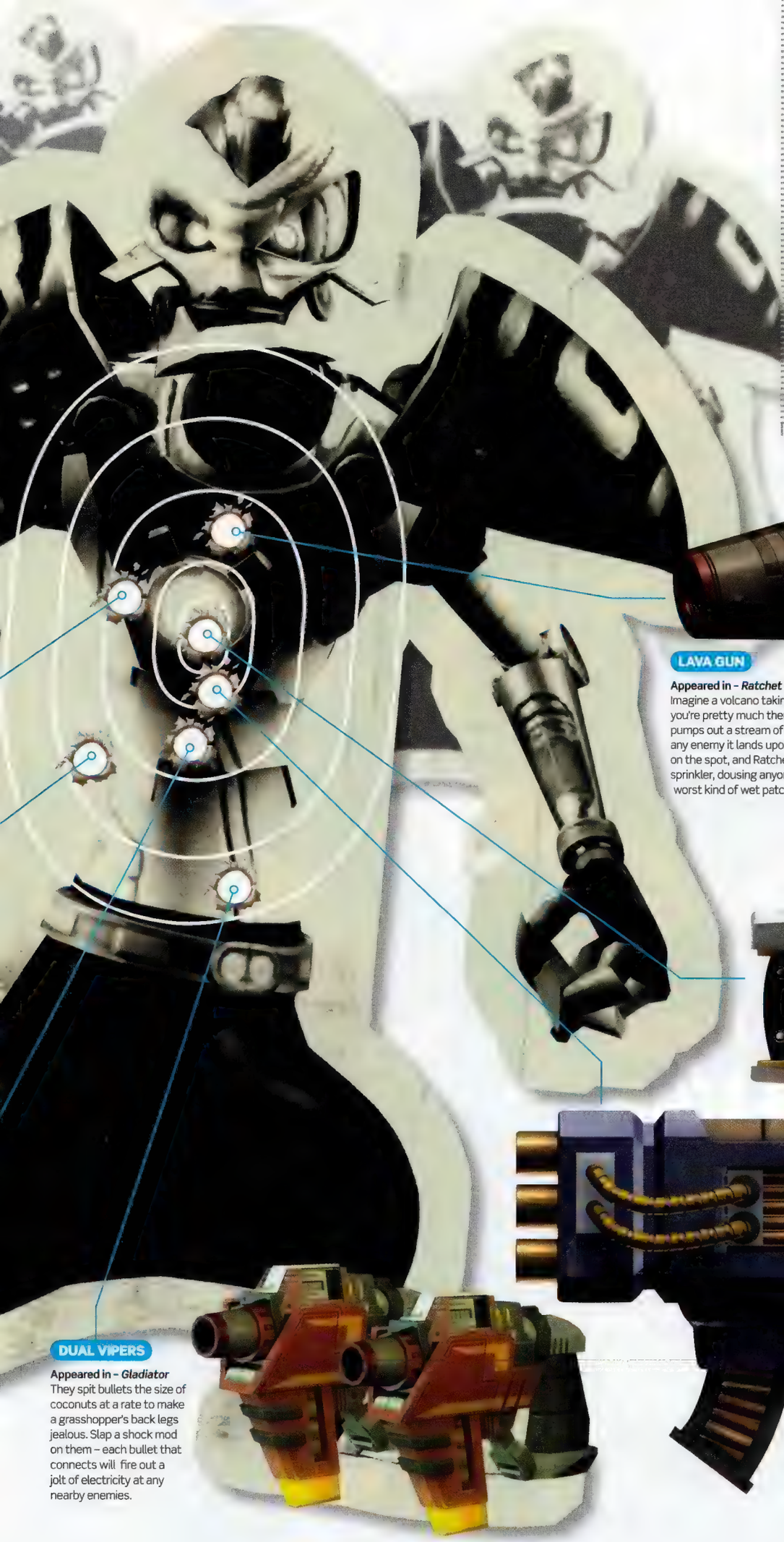
Appeared in – *Ratchet 2, 3* and *Gladiator*
The Qwack-o-Ray, when fully powered up, transforms baddies into flaming fowl (crispy ducks?) that then turn on everyone else. Many a *Ratchet* game has featured weapons that convert bad guys into farmyard animals, just for the hell of it.

MINI-TURRET LAUNCHER

Appear in – Ratchet: Gladiator
Not the most innovative of weapons, but offers the chance to sway the odds in your favour just as a major ruckus is about to kick off. Toss a few of these around before taking matters into your own hands, and you'll have a handful of bullet-spewing sentry guns as back up. When powered up, they'll spit railgun-style rounds that'll pierce multiple enemies.

Ratchet and Clank PS3

You can read more about Ratchet on PS3 in the supplement that comes with this issue, but the big news on mad new weapons is the Groovitron. It's a massive gun that fires out disco balls to make your enemies stop and dance, forgetting all about trying to rip out your gizzards with their teeth, so you can take your time in blowing their eyeballs clean out of their heads. Which sounds more or less like the best weapon ever. More on *Tools Of Destruction*, as its known, as and when.



LAVA GUN

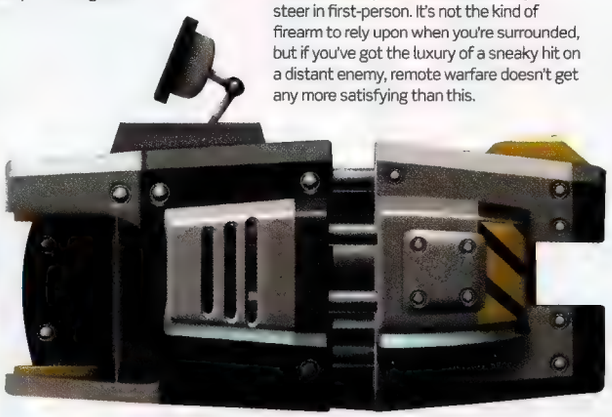
Appeared in – *Ratchet 2* and *3*

Imagine a volcano taking a piss, and you're pretty much there. The Lava Gun pumps out a stream of star-hot magma, singeing any enemy it lands upon. Let rip while spinning on the spot, and Ratchet turns into a deadly sprinkler, dousing anyone close enough with the worst kind of wet patch imaginable.

VISIBOMB GUN

Appeared in – *Ratchet & Clank*

The Visibomb gun fires missiles that you steer in first-person. It's not the kind of firearm to rely upon when you're surrounded, but if you've got the luxury of a sneaky hit on a distant enemy, remote warfare doesn't get any more satisfying than this.



R.Y.N.O

Appeared in – *Ratchet & Clank 1, 2* and *3*

Short for 'Rip Ya a New One'. Quite simply, it's a hilariously overpowered handcannon that can often take down boss characters in just a few hits. Only available late into the game or during a second playthrough and usually costing millions of bolts, it was replaced in *Gladiator* by the wicked Harbinger, which launched multiple shafts of deadly lasers.

DUAL VIPERS

Appeared in – *Gladiator*

They spit bullets the size of coconuts at a rate to make a grasshopper's back legs jealous. Slap a shock mod on them – each bullet that connects will fire out a jolt of electricity at any nearby enemies.

Pub Square Enix
Dev Square Enix
FYI PS2 | 2007 | PSM82 94%
Six characters battle some demented political powers to save the ultra-pretty land of Dalmasca with real-time battles across enormous landscapes

PLAYSTATION GENIUS

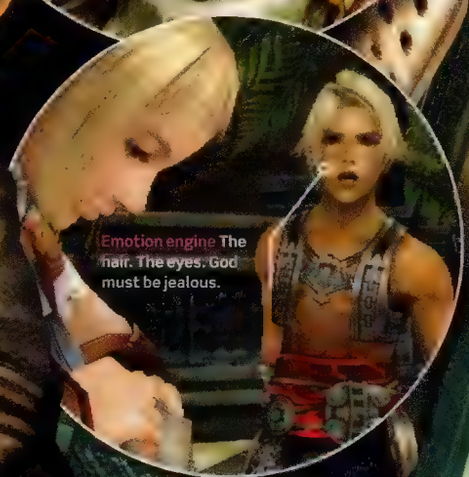
10 reasons why Final Fantasy XII is true RPG royalty

Steve Bailey

1 THE CHARACTERS LOOK NEARLY REAL

PS3 may be able to model human faces right down to the dirtiest detail of a shaving rash, but it isn't worth the rendering time if the eyes look like marbles and mouths move like sock puppets. FFXII's characters are more stylized than realistic, but they're so very *convincing* that it's likely you'll just stop and goggle during those spooky moments when the skilled animation, direction and beautifully rendered mugs come together to hypnotic effect in many a cut-scene.

Lip service Faces so stylish, they're as convincing as Bright Night's.


Emotion engine The hair. The eyes. God must be jealous.

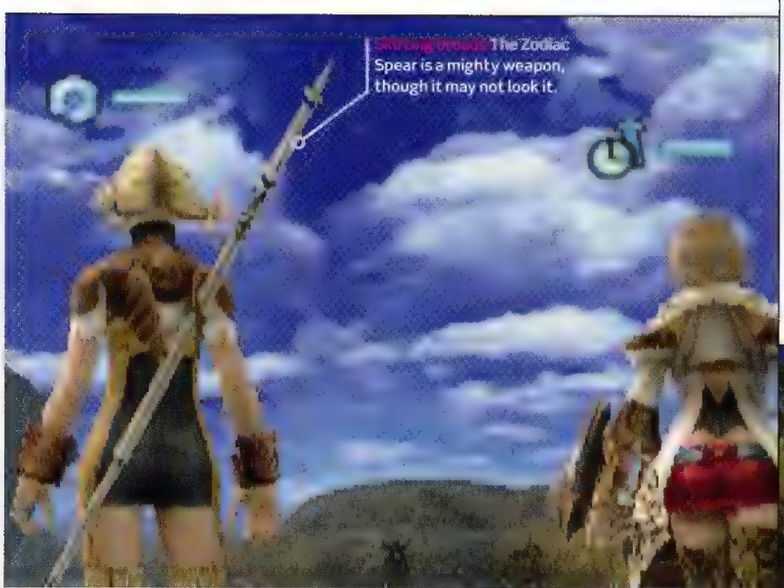
3 IT'S NOT ALL GRIM

FFXII is serious business, full of grave brooding, tortured pasts, desperate battles and heavyweight emotions. But there's a lighter side: the Sky Pirate's Den is a collection room, accessible from the menu screen, where you unlock neat little character sprites in return for certain in-game achievements. The point? Not much, really – it's just for fun. And cooing over.

Story-thus if only there's was a way to export them for use in Home on PS3...
Trickster
Awarded for defeating the Trickster, earning you the title of Sharpshooter.

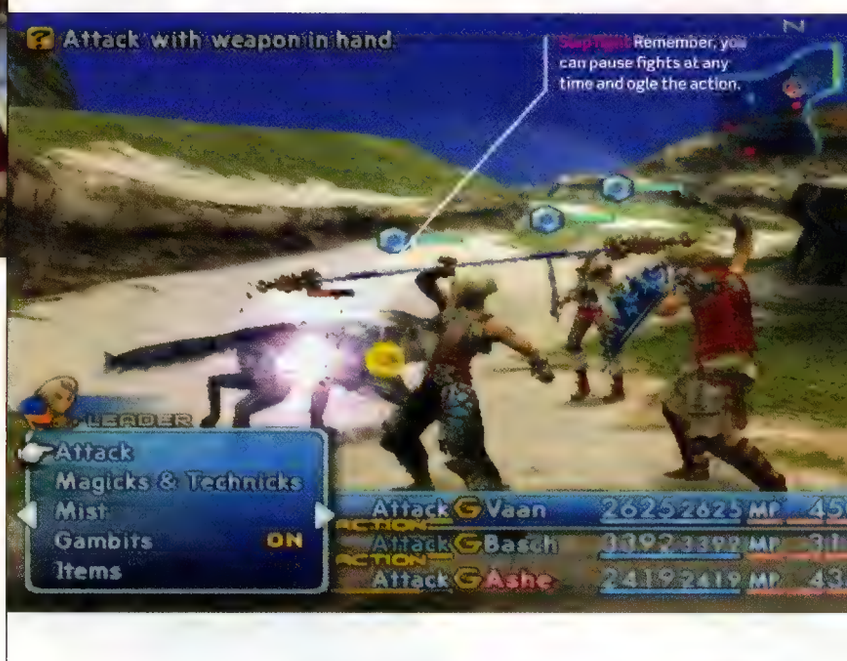
2 ABSURD POWER MIST ATTACKS

If you want to deliver a face-cracking wallop to a mini-boss, then you should employ some Mist Knacks. They allow you to trade off your magic points in exchange for some devastating attacks. Best of all, Mist offensives can be chained and if you manage to execute a long enough sequence, you'll end with a special flourish attack powerful enough to knock Spain into Canada.



5 YOU COULD PLAY IT FOR YEARS

You'll need to invest time 'grinding' – boosting your stats by defeating stacks of smaller bosses, the RPG equivalent of homework – in order to see your way to the end of the story. *FFXII* is all too aware of this, and its myriad sub-aspects (hunting for contracted creature kills, unearthing rare creatures, chaining same-enemy kills for rare loot and items) can keep you playing waaaaay longer than you planned, thanks to the slickness of the combat system. You have been warned.



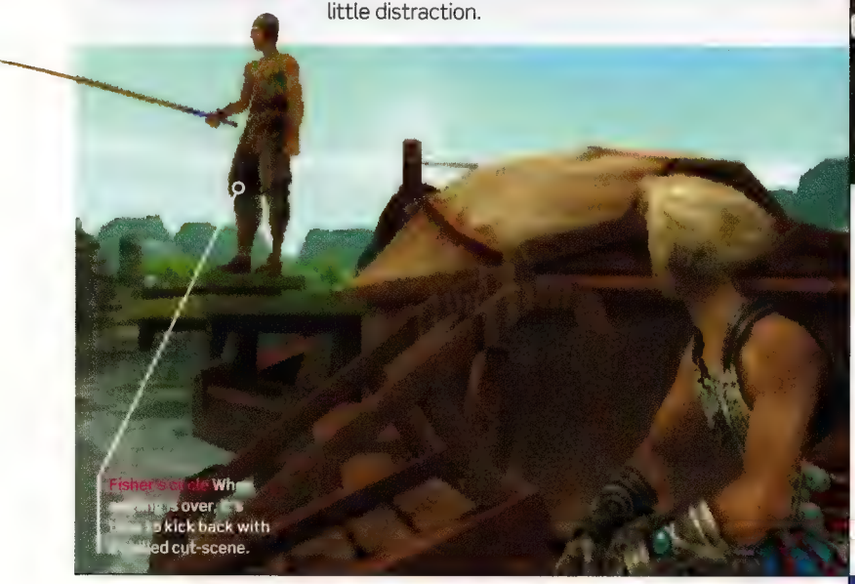
4 HARDEST TO FIND WEAPON EVER

FFXII's weapons are as cool as iPod-flavoured ice cream. Swords go THWACK, guns go BOOM and every character looks sexy as hell no matter which blade, shield or staff they're packing. But what's the strongest weapon? Easy – it's the Zodiac Spear with attack points of +150. How do you get this game-breaking mama? It's not easy. Here's a clue, though – some chests need to stay well and truly shut...

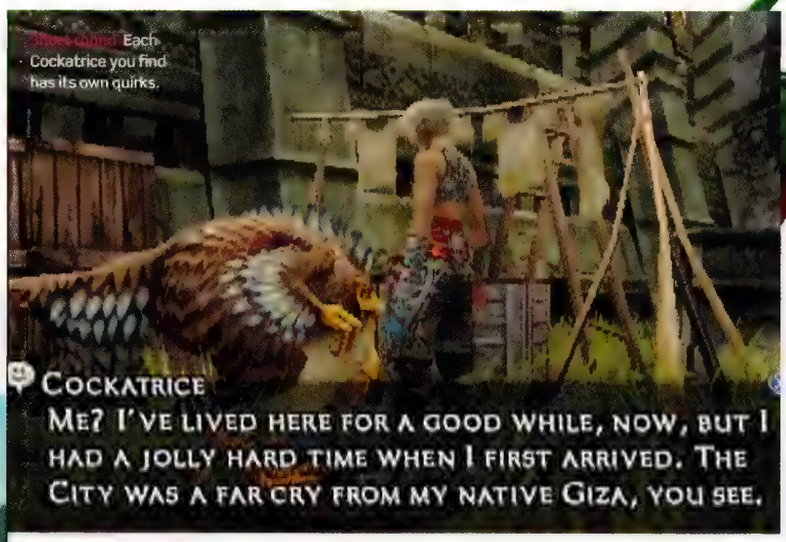
ON THE DISC
Keep an eye out for the latest on FFXIII on PS3.

6 YOU CAN TAKE TIME TO RELAX

When established RPG fans complain about *FFXII*, their biggest beef always seems to come down to the fact that it's *different*. But don't be deceived by such naysayers – different is good. It even has a little fishing minigame, requiring you to match button prompts as they 'swim' across the screen. While this might not be the kind of behaviour you'd generally expect from a role-playing game, it's still a soothing little distraction.



Fisher's circle Wh[en] [it] is over, [you] kick back with [a] [re]lied cut-scene.


Short Cuts Each Cockatrice you find has its own quirks.
COCKATRICE
ME? I'VE LIVED HERE FOR A GOOD WHILE, NOW, BUT I HAD A JOLLY HARD TIME WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED. THE CITY WAS A FAR CRY FROM MY NATIVE GIZA, YOU SEE.

7 THE BIRDS TALK

If you're a particularly observant player, you may notice that you'll come across the occasional Cockatrice – dumpy little fowl that look like an angry chicken that's swallowed a giant bowling ball and get from one place to the other by rolling around – that *talks* to you. And so begins one of Final Fantasy XII's strangest side-quests: to find all such bizarre creatures strewn across the world, an endeavour that offers plenty of rewards for the hard-working, not least some odd cut-scenes.

8 FRAN-TASY STAR

You'll never expect to fall in love with Fran. Maybe you're a Penelo sort of guy, taken by her teen cutie charms, or the foxy royalty and stubbornness of Ashe. But don't fight it. Fran is a quiet weirdo to begin with, but reveals herself to be the sassiest and most alluring of *FFXII*'s intricate ladies, a sexpot to more folk than just the furry fetishists. That luscious, tumbledown hair. Those S&M stilettos. That dusky, freaky voice. No-one else looks that good with a giant bow slung across their back. Don't fight it.

Mandragora C readies Vespersong.
Actually, the fellas will help out, [as] you don't accidentally thump one of them.
Balthier
Fran
Penelo

9 SEE IT TO BELIEVE IT

In the few hours before reaching the Phon Coast – about halfway through the game – you'll have been feeling hemmed in by the murky Salikawood, a tree-top mini-labyrinth. And then, suddenly you enter the Phon Coast. Miles of Cliffside beach, stretching out as far as the eye can see, basking beneath a brilliant sky. If your enthusiasm was flagging any, the Phon Coast puts it smack back on track.

10

THE SUMMON CREATURES ARE JUST AMAZING

Forget you, Pikachu. This is what you need in your pocket when you go into battle – one of *FFXII*'s strapping summons, the Espers. If you're caught in a tight spot or want to dole out unfair punishment to some standard enemies, you can call upon one of these titans to join you. Keep them alive long enough, and they'll go apocalypse-mental, a sequence that demands to be seen. The catch? You've got to defeat each Esper before you can own it. And most are hidden...

CUCHULAINN

ADRAMMELECH

FAMFRIT

MATEUS

CHAOS

ZEROMUS

ZALERA

SHEMHAZAI

BELIAS

EXODUS

ULTIMA

The ones we didn't pick...

Chocobo rides
These iconic FF birds provide you with passage through the world. And if you can't find a Chocobo taxi rank, you could try taming a wild one.

The Judges
FFXII's brutal bad guys? Or misunderstood goodies? *FFXII*'s story is about more than simple stereotypes. Gotta love those awesome cloak 'n' helmet costumes that each judge gets to stomp around in.

The Licence Board
This allows you to customise any character to use any weapon, skill or equipment as you see fit. They soon feel like your own personal team. Brilliant.

EMAIL PSM3 @
Disagree with our choice? Then send us your picks.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

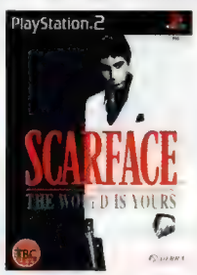
ON THE DISC
Scarface PS3? We bet there'll be one, and you'll see it on a disc.

PLAYSTATION EXPLOITS

Pimp your mansion with mad luxury items in Scarface

Dave Harrison

EMAIL PSM3
Want a game exploded in ludicrous detail? Tell us: **psm3@futurenet.co.uk**



Pub VU Games
Dev Radical Entertainment
FYI PS2 | 2006 | PSM81 89%
A top game that captures the dark humour, action and excess of the '80s classic while introducing some superb additions to the 'crime-sim genre. At the heart of it all is the sociopathic, potty-mouthed monster Tony Montana – a superb gaming anti-hero

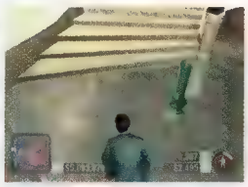
PIMP YOUR MANSION

The 25 essential exotic goods for the home

It's not just about making money and swearing at people in *The World Is Yours*. Building up your reputation is essential, and can be done by spending stupid amounts of money decorating your mansion. Here's some of the best buys.

Buy... The milk crate
Price: Free
Reputation points: Zero
Perhaps not the obvious item to pimp your mansion with, but it *is* free and at the start of the game, take what you can.

Buy... The Exploding Barrel
Price: Free
Reputation points: Zero
A videogame staple you can position anywhere you want in your home. Free of charge, but fun to blow up.

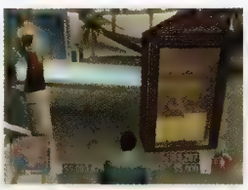


Buy... The Bong
Price: $2000
Reputation points: 1000
A surprise inclusion – we thought Tony had different taste in recreational pastimes. Adds a hippy vibe to the place.

Buy... The Drinks Machine
Price: $2500
Reputation points: 3000
Tony loves his Coke and he's a busy man, so what better way to get thirst-quenching soda than this machine?

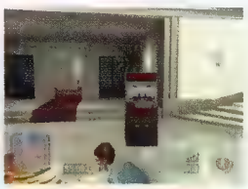
Buy... The Chaise Lounge
Price: $450,000
Reputation points: 250,000
Wow... bet you were expecting a bit more for your money, but even though it looks a bit naff, it improves your rep loads

Buy... The Drinks Cabinet
Price: $7000
Reputation points: 8000
A classy wood finish and a decent range of tipples for Tony to sample as he relaxes and swears at his girlfriends.



Buy... The Humidor
Price: $80,000
Reputation points: 68,000
Tony is a Cuban and they just love their cigars, so this humidor is a perfect purchase and good for your rep.

Buy...The Cognac Fountain
Price: $300,000
Reputation points: 600,000
This is not only the most amazing idea *ever*, but almost pays for itself with rep points – it's fantastic value.



Buy... The Slot Machine
Price: $6,000
Reputation points: 10,000
A poor relation to the Video Poker machine, but it has the benefit of being interactive if you fancy losing money

Buy... The Solid Gold Bust
Price: $1,000,000
Reputation points: 350,000
Now have you spotted the mistake? Yeah, that's right it's not *actually* a bust, although it does have a solid gold one...

Buy... The Video Poker
Price: $8000
Reputation points: 5000
Another interactive exotic and a mildy diverting one at that. Gives the mansion a real Vegas feel.

Buy... The Pizza Man
Price: 4000
Reputation points: 6000
Ho! What a jolly man! And what a really tacky statue – it really is just a small fat chef carrying a pizza in one hand. Why?

Buy... The Modern Art
Price: $147,000
Reputation points: 90,000
Hmmm... that says 'pain', that says 'anger', that says to me that I've wasted my money on a pile of tat.

Buy... Manny's Remains
Price: $8000
Reputation points: 10,000
Manny was Tony's best mate, and they were such good friends that Tony shot him for marrying his sister...

Buy... Gina's Remains
Price: $8000
Reputation points: $19,000
...and talking of Tony's sister, here are *her* ashes. She got killed by an assassin hired to take out her brother.

Buy... The Giant Bottle
Price: $85,000
Reputation points: 120,000
We think this is the best thing around. Who wouldn't want a massive bottle in the house? Now *that's* taste.

Buy... The Grand Piano
Price: $120,000
Reputation points: 50,000
Presumably Tony is self taught – we can't really see him going to lessons. Bet he plays a mean Chopsticks.

Buy... The Solid Gold Tiger
Price: $3,000,000
Reputation points: 2,550,000
Probably bought in memory of the white tiger that he lost at the start of the game. This one eats less, though.

Buy... The Dumpster
Price: Free
Reputation points: Zero
Just like the crate and the barrel this won't cost a thing, and adds an interesting industrial feel to the mansion.

Buy... The Inca Gold
Price: $160,000
Reputation points: 450,000
Another case of money well spent, as it sends your reputation rocketing for a relatively low sum.

Buy... The Inca Mummy
Price: $450,000
Reputation points: 550.000
Not as attractive as the gold, not as cost effective either, but it shows Tony's cultured and intellectual side.

Buy Genghis Khan Armour
Price: $2,000,000
Reputation points: 1,000,000
Genghis Khan and Tony have a lot in common – both are ruthless and power hungry and, it seems, small as well.

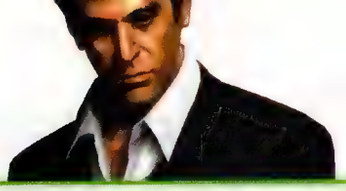
Buy... The Faith Diamond
Price: $18,000,000
Reputation points: 3,000,000
This is a purchase for those with money to burn. Reassuringly expensive and reassuringly reputation-boosting.

Buy... The Beer Cooler
Price: $1000
Reputation points: 2000
Now this just smacks of class and is the one exotic we'd kill for. No, really. Strangely, it doesn't help the rep much.

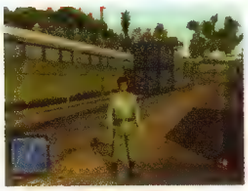
Buy... The Space suit
Price: $1,000,000
Reputation points: 750,000
Once the world is his, it seems Tony has plans to conquer space – in this lovely (and pricey) authentic space suit.

Blazin' FAQ

Q What's the best way to increase your Balls rating and unleash the Rage mode at the same time?
A During the first [illegible] use the [illegible] to [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]



SUITS Dress to kill



Suit 1... Military Chic
You only get to wear this suit once, and that's the in the tutorial mode at the start of the game that takes the form of a flashback into Tony's time in Cuba.

Suit 2... Hawaiian Print
After being turfed out of your mansion, these are the only threads Tony has. Enter 'HAWAII' as a cheat code to allow you to change into them at any time.

Suit 2... Black
A lovely suit cut that's elegant but still manly. This for is when Tony is doing well. Enter 'BLACK' as a cheat code to allow you to don it at any time.

Suit 3... Blue pinstripe
This blue pin stripe is perfect for visits to the bank up meeting up with other dealers. To unlock it, enter the code 'BLUESH' in the cheat menu.

Suit 4... Gray with shades
To unlock this, enter 'GRAYSH' in the cheat menu. If you don't fancy the sunglasses, just enter 'GRAY' instead. It's good alternative to the blue pinstripe.

Suit 5... White
With a gorgeous crimson shirt, this has a touch of the Saturday Night Fevers. Just enter 'WHITE' in the cheat menu, and then find the nearest party.

THE CREW The henchmen and henchwoman

The Driver Costs $15,000 and earns you 11,000 rep points. A must buy and extremely handy. Delivers your cars on demand, and is a playable character with a set of driving missions.

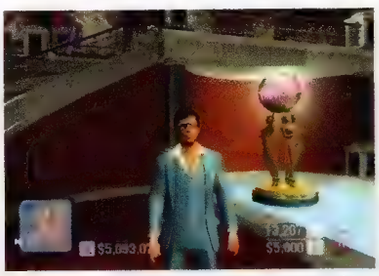
The Enforcer Costs $30,000 and earns you 40,000 rep points. Has his own 'Enforcer' missions wich are worth doing, as they not only give you money but reduce Gang Heat as well.

Boat Pilot Costs $40,000 and earns you 60,000 rep points. Another must buy, but he's not a playable character. His main role is delivering your boats to you when you call.

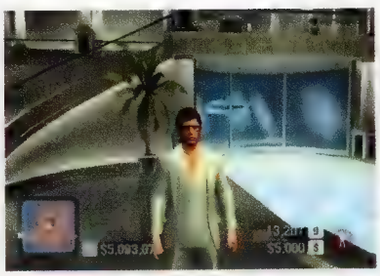
The Assassin Costs $100,000 and earns you 200,000 rep points. This saucy lass is another playable character with her own series of the missions. She's deadly with the sniper rifle.

DECOR Changing rooms

Knackered mansion When you first get to see your mansion, it's in complete state after being torn apart during the assassination attempt at the start of the game.



Basic mansion Costs $25,000 and earns you 47,000 rep points. This is the first interior make over, and all it does is restore the mansion to the state it was in during the movie.



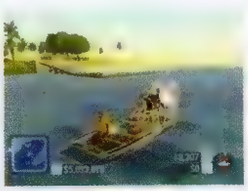
Modern mansion Costs $400,000 and earns you 100,000 rep points. This is a really classy job, turning the mansion a cool gray colour and installing a shark tank by the fountain.

Eclectic mansion Costs $400,000 and earns you 300,000 rep points. Costs the same as Modern, but uses red and gold to give a much warmer and homely feel. Better for the rep as well.

BOATS Making waves

Sail... The Attack Boat
Price: $35,000
Reputation points: 30,000
Quick and well armed, but it requires a henchmen to man the mounted gun.

Sail... The Cigarette Boat
Price: $1,000,000
Reputation points: 250,000
This is the 'Gun' version, and has mounted automatic weapons on the front.



Sail... The Fan Boat
Price: $4000
Reputation points: 5000
it's fun, but very poorly protected and tricky to handle. For pleasure only.

Sail... The Racing Boat
Price: $750,000
Reputation points: 250,000
The fastest boat in the game, perfect for avoiding pirates and the police.

Sail... The Fishing Boat
Price: $350,000
Reputation points: 120,000
Plenty of character, but it's not that fast and doesn't offer that much protection.

Sail... The Yacht
Price: $4,000,000
Reputation points: 1,000,000
This isn't particularly practical, but it's the ultimate in luxury sailing.

MOTORING The finest drives

Drive... The Odin VH88
Price: $160,000
Reputation points: 50,000
Slow, but great for distribution missions as it can take shedloads of damage.

Drive... The Bulldozer
Price: $250,000
Reputation points: 100,000
The perfect vehicle for going on slow rampages through the Miami streets.

Drive... The Rattler
Price: $3,000,000
Reputation points: 400,000
Costs a lot, but this the best all-round car in the whole game.

Drive... The Ariel MKIII
Price: $1,200,000
Reputation points: 290,000
This is lightning fast, but only has the one seat and isn't well armoured.

Drive... The Albatross
Price: $875,000
Reputation points: 250,000
Good all-round car that looks fantastic and has wicked Gull-Wing doors.

Drive Bodog Stampede
Price: $8,000,000
Reputation points: 400,00
A Hummer-style beast of a machine with a huge assault rifle on the roof.

ON THE DISC
Free Rad's *Haze* is on

PLAYSTATION SECRETS

Facing the tragic consequences of murder in Second Sight

Moral fibre
Is this the first PS2 game to make you face the consequences of killing an enemy? Probably. And it's just one example of the insane detail in *Second Sight*. Most computers in the game can be accessed, most containing easter eggs and secrets like this, though the others aren't as harrowing. If only all developers were as dedicated to extraneous detail as Free Radical. We hope *Haze* on PlayStation 3 has a similar attention to detail.

HyperChat v1.077
[LR] Hang on, back in a bit. Th
elevator's coming, and I do
want to get caught chatting
[bunny] ok love u
LR leaves the room
LR enters the room (1 other person here)
[bunny] cant wait 2 c u
[bunny] wish u were here with me
[bunny] miss u
[bunny] hello?
[bunny] HELLO?
[bunny] please say something
[bunny] talk to me!!!!!!!
[bunny] what's wrong???
[bunny] has something happened
"Face the consequences of killing"
finish with computer

1 The elevator

The great escape [illegible], having just discovered his telekinetic powers, begins his escape from hospital. After killing two orderlies by throwing bins at their heads he takes an elevator downstairs and is held at gunpoint by a security guard at a reception desk.

2 The murder

Beautiful mind As the guard draws closer, Vetch suddenly falls to his knees and unleashes a ripping bubble of psychic energy. It sends the terrified guy flying backwards into his desk. The kid gets [illegible] and visibly wonders what he just did, and how.

3 The chatroom

Log on [illegible] the guard's computer and see a chatroom icon on the desktop. Click on it and you discover that just before you'd arrived, he'd been talking to his girlfriend. You watch dumbstruck as she leaves a string of teary messages wondering where he is.

PlayStation's best kept secrets uncovered every month

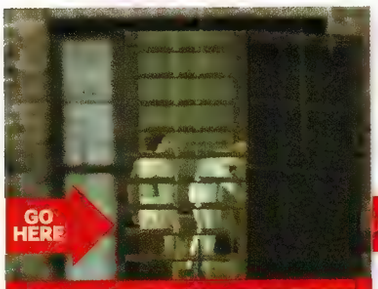
Secrets › **Harry Potter: Quidditch World Cup** › Meet the Bulgarians

Don't pretend you don't have this game. Collect 25 Quidditch cards for the D'Orazio Dive move.

Find 65 Quidditch cards and you'll be able to play as the Bulgarian Quidditch team. Yay.

Find every card in the game – 104 of them – to earn the ghost of Edgar Cloggs as a character.

Weirdness › **Max Payne 2** › Pervy sex messages and pianos



In the sniper's room, look through the right scope for a slightly peculiar clip.

Then listen to the sniper's recordings of Max on the phone. To a sex chat line. Ew, *Max*.

In part one, chapter seven is this piano. Walk up to it, and Max plays his theme tune.

Scariness › **Project Zero 2** › Alternate ending

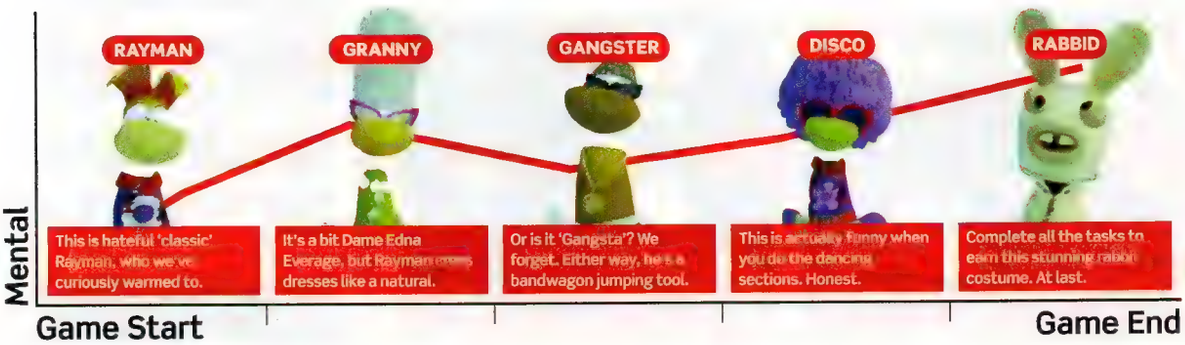
Finish the game on Hard mode. This unlocks Chapter Zero. Head down the steps by the altar.

Finish the chapter by defeating Sae-a and Mae. Difficult, but you can do it.

And you'll get this extra scary alternate ending. Don't have nightmares, now.

From zero to hero in... Rayman

From limbless doofus to armless rabbit in *Rayman Raving Rabbids*.



This is hateful 'classic' Rayman, who we've curiously warmed to.

It's a bit Dame Edna Everage, but Rayman rocks dresses like a natural.

Or is it 'Gangsta'? We forget. Either way, he's a bandwagon jumping tool.

This is actually funny when you do the dancing sections. Honest.

Complete all the tasks to earn this stunning rabbit costume. At last.

The Top 5

Cheats you *must* know

1 SOCOM: Combined Assault

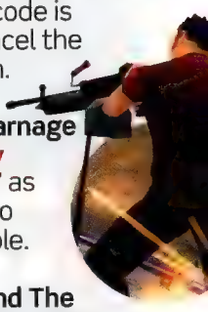
Display co-ordinates

Pause the game and press □, △, ○(2), L1, △, ○(2), △, □. Resume the game and your current coordinates will be displayed at the bottom right corner.

2 The Warriors PSP

Infinite Health

While playing the game, press ↑, △, →, SELECT, ⊗, L1. Activating rage while this code is enabled will cancel the unlimited health.



3 Chili Con Carnage

Invincibility

Enter 'ERNESTO' as a profile name to become invincible.

4 The Fast And The Furious: Tokyo Drift

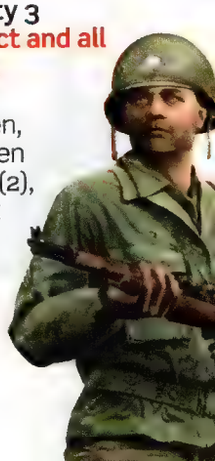
Easy money

Buy the $35,000 '02 350Z Fairlady Nismo S-tune, then sell it back to the dealership for $37,300. Bunch of suckers.

5 Call Of Duty 3

Level Select and all bonus content

At the chapter selection screen, hold SELECT and then press →(2), ←(2), □(2) to unlock all levels and bonus content there is in the game.



ON THE DISC
Def Jam: Icon is reviewed on the disc this month

This just in! Trevor McDonald duffed up in Def Jam: Icon

Dave Harrison

"And finally, some news of a serious ass whooping!"
The Fight
TREVOR MCDONALD
SCARE-MONGERING PRESENTER
Career Record
His Tonight programme thinks games make kids violent. As if.
VS
THE GAME
TATTOOED RAPPER
Career Record
Was once shot five times in drugs deal, spending five days in a coma.
"Here is the news, mofo!"

Maccy Dee [illegible] 'violent games' business, but his blows are blocked.

Just in [illegible] done, and chucks him into a nearby car. Bock!

Breaking news [illegible] hotspots to 'scoop' Trev up into the air.

Burn the hard way An explosion sets the petrol alight. Trev's got the burning issues now, deffo.

Flame grilled [illegible] just been grilled like one of their fine beef patties.

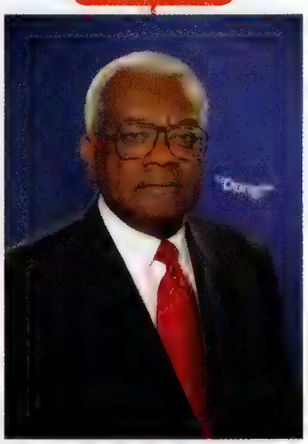
Trevil toasted [illegible] violent? Nah, pal, didn't think so.

USE DEF JAM ICON

Go to	F.A.C.E. Mode

Editing Tip Play around with our suggested Active settings.

MAKING TREV!



Morphing Menu	
Height	170
Skin Tone	Dark
Body Type	Low Centre
Head	
Skull Cranium	Top left
Skull Brow	Centre
Eyes Postion	Middle Left
Eyes Shape	Bottom Left
Nose	Bridge: bottom left, Tip: Top Right
Lips	Thick: down left, Shape: top right
Jaw	Bottom centre
Chin	Middle right
Cheeks	Top right
Features	
Eye colour	Dark Brown
Hairstyle/colour	Short Wave/Blonde
Eyerbrows	Style curve
Facial Hari	Light Brown full mustache
Fighting Style	Black Panther
Fight Song	All Out - Sean Paul
Items from store	
Pant	Dress Pants, Dark Brown
Shirt	Dress shirt, White Button-up
Jacket	Dress Cost, Black Blazer
Shoes	Black Dress Shoes
Glasses	Tinted Fade: Gold

@ [illegible] Who should we twat? Mail psm3@futurenet.co.uk

dbm

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e.g: text 250588 to 80155* text IRE (space) CODE to 57856

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*SEE T&C'S BELOW FOR ITEM PRICING AND GAME COMPATIBILITY

SEXY GIRL VIDS

259477 Asian Babe

259819 Hot Lounge Babe

256041 PVC Pants

259815 Dirty Anna

256105 Pretty in Pink!

255649 Blonde In Shower

256078 Bent Over!

256258 Very Hot Brunette

256232 Lime Bikini Babe

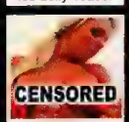
255251 Ice Lolly Teaser

254825 Cheeky Tartan

254903 Hot A**

255654 Michelle B

255467 Pink Bikini Tease



250216 Busty Blonde

255664 Tiffany Reveals 'Em

255543 Sofa Teaser

254906 Giant Melons

256053 Full Moon

250051 Bumper Amy Alexander Vid

250766 Sexy Lucy Zara Video

BUMPER VIDEOS

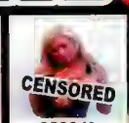
BUMPER VIDS UP TO 5 MINS LONG

250770 Hot Blonde on Bed

250677 Tasty Blonde Babe

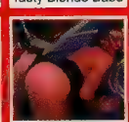
250675 Exotic Babe

250679 Filthy Secretary



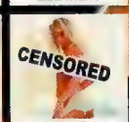
250241 Lisa Marie

250678 Blonde in Lingerie


250497 Chantelle & Charmaine

250673 Naughty Bird

255111 Babe In Pink



255114 Bedroom Blonde

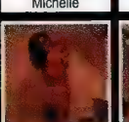
AMATEUR WIVES VIDS

250318 Elsie

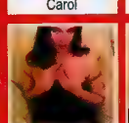
250410 Michelle

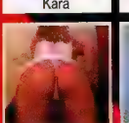
250316 Jean

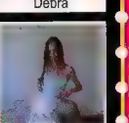
250312 Carol


250313 Kara

250317 Debra


250749 Amanda


250748 Sarah


250315 Jenny

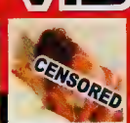
GIRL ON GIRL VIDEOS

254466 Lusty Duo

254900 Double Trouble

254902 Hot Girl on Girl

255638 Love in An Elevator



250568 Hot And Steamy Action

254467 Two's Company

254465 Red Hot Babes

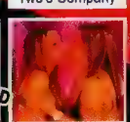
254463 Marie & Shelley

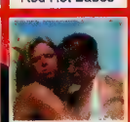
254468 Saucy Duo

250564 Karen & Antonia Get Naughty

255614 Sarah & Monica

254462 Jane & Beth


255662 Tiffany & Porch romp


254461 Tasty Duo

COOL GAMES

254812

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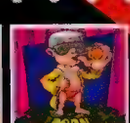
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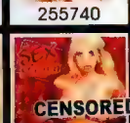

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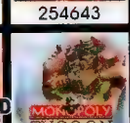
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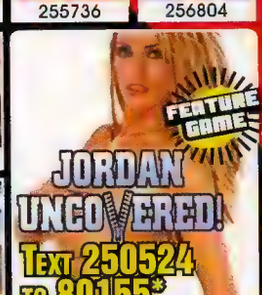

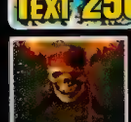
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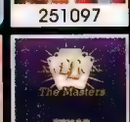

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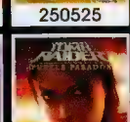
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*see T&C's below for item pricing

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COLLEGE GIRLS AWESOME EXPLOITS	255221
3 STUNNERS 1 LUCKY BLOKE	255230
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REAL NASTY ACTION	255523
HOW MANY FINGERS?	256000
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2 HOT BLONDES ONE BIG TOY	256404

256121 Screaming Orgasm

255092 Can't Get Enough

254887 Dont Moan. Gobble

259615 Roadside Gobjob

250413 Euro Teen 69

250414 Filthy Euro Teen

259618 Lesbian Strap-On

250416 Dirty Euro Whore

250415 Do Anything to Please

250623 Sexy Strip Tease

250621 Dirty Secretary

250664 Filthy First Timers

250741 Mai Hardcore

256400 Tartan Teaser Gets It

255096 MILF Hard Action

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WATCH ME LICK & WAIT 4 IT	256431
HOT LESBIAN SESSION	256432
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SIT ON IT BABY	254830
GET A LOAD OF THIS	254832
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WATCH ME PLAY	256091
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DIRTY GIRLS REAR ACTION	255218
DOGGIN IN THE WOODS	256430
HOT OUTDOOR ACTION	255098
FILTHY FOURSOME ACTION	255224
SKI LIFT GOBBLE	254890

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ON THE DISC
If *SOS 2* ever appears in Britain, it'll be on our disc

PLAYSTATION CLASSIC

Why SOS: The Final Escape's ugliness doesn't matter

Steve Williams

Pub Agetec | **Dev** Irem
FYI PS2 | 2003 | PSM3 81%
Survival horror minus the zombies, plus the exploration of Tomb Raider. And RPG elements.

It's not uncommon to hear people moaning about the charts. Too many sequels, too many pretty-boy licenses with all the looks but no innovation. But, like it or not, the games at the top are there because more people bought them than anything else. Like it or not, a lot of people are quite stupid. And *SOS: The Final Escape* never made number one because hardly anyone bought it.

Could be because of marketing budgets, could be a huge EA/Sony/FBI conspiracy, but it's more likely because it looks like something wrenched from an 80 year-old drug smuggler during an unusually boisterous cavity search.

SOS is hardly alone in being ugly, but it's one of those rare games that proves the hardcore whingers right – what you do in a game is more important than how it looks. It takes a simple, strong idea and builds on it with a steady flow of interesting challenges, events and novelties. It looks like an elephant that's stood on four landmines at once, yet it's way more fun than a good-looking but generic adventure such as, say, *Tomb Raider: Angel of Darkness* or *Cy Girls*.

Bridge over troubled water

So, this is the deal: you're on a long bridge in what's clearly Japan when a massive earthquake hits. Initially knocked out, you barely escape the collapse only to find you were actually unconscious for 24 hours and everybody's gone. Worse, the man-made island you're now on is rapidly sinking under regular aftershocks. This is ace. On the downside, you're called Keith.

EMAIL PSM3 @
What do you think of *SSX 'Splitters 2*? Let us know: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

It's survival horror where the horror doesn't come from genetic freaks or zombies, but the world itself. It's not about shooting, it's about risky ledges, collapsing buildings, perilous crawlspaces and tools lashed together from whatever you can find. And the last game to call you something lame and make you fight the world? *Half-Life*. Though more popular on PC, Gordon Freeman came to PS2 so you may know his game is still considered

The defining moment...

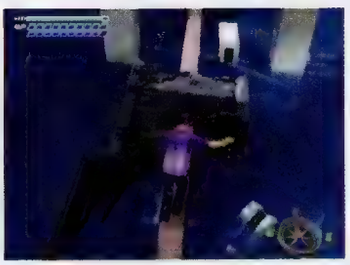
Hanging on

Very little of your progress is safe, and Irem make good use of believable city features – collapsing ladders and bridges, abandoned fire engines, toppling skyscrapers and so on. It's very linear, but you still feel clever and resourceful solving the myriad problems the quakes drop in your lap. And it's admirably simple: the green bar is health, while the blue one is your steadily depleting energy. Clean water refills it – drink often or die.

GameAmmo

"Keith loves a drink – use every tap to fill your bottle to avoid collapse"

The *SOS: The Final Escape* thrill-o-graph



genius after nearly ten years. It had a great story, but it didn't need one – the answer to 'Why am I doing this?' was always 'To reach the surface and escape.' It's a bullet-proof motivation that greatly aids immersion.

Hands up, *SOS* is no *Half-Life*, but it shares a bullet-proof scenario. Why are you looking for this, going there, risking that? Not because a talking head in your watch tells you to or because you've got amnesia, but simply to escape the island and survive. It's basic and it does wonders – *SOS* proves that believability and player involvement isn't just down to photorealisim. It draws you in despite visuals, animations and sounds that would make a jar of pus gag.

OK, a couple of the earlier points weren't quite true. There *are* a few others around – survivors such as the attractive Karen, who's not wearing any knickers (honestly). You can woo her even as the raised roadways are a-toppling, just by chivalry – giving her your brolly in the rain, helping her find her dog, not bursting into her room while she's changing... Also key is the hilariously clichéd, fag-smoking investigative reporter Greg, who'll soon put you onto the idea that Stiver Island's disaster isn't all it seems. There's a degree of moral choice – do you help them or not? Do you console or dismiss them? Can you save them? It's a neat touch.

And the other untrue point? There's a *bit* of shooting, mostly at you. There are people who don't want you to expose what you've learnt about the island's man-made foundations. The best bits, however, are calm. In fact, nothing since the very first *Tomb Raider* has set you exploring in such silence and loneliness. But where Core's decision was a design one, *SOS*'s sense of melancholy is an accident, the result of a soundscape every bit as catastrophic as the earthquakes on screen. Running, swimming and wind effects are jaw-droppingly awful, while the voice acting is surely the work of drugged and confused passers-by. The bending, wobbling roads and buildings are brilliant, however, even if they're just uniformly grey and blurry while static.

A raft of good ideas

Irem at least know how to whip up an entertaining scenario. Building a raft where most games would just have you make another jump is great – even if the payoff is unintentionally funny – while being able to paint flames or flowers on it is brilliant. Escaping from a flood on a bicycle with a woman and a dog is just comedy, especially while wearing a bus driver's hat, yellow shades and elbow-length gloves (there's all kinds of clothing, some of it protective). Symbolising the deaths of an old couple with a falling photograph of them together is a lot less funny, surprisingly, despite it being as ineptly implemented as nearly everything else.

But that's the thing about *SOS*. It proves that a good enough idea, even if done cheaply and at times hopelessly, still works. And it beats playing a game of zero ideas that's built on nothing but expensive beauty.

CLASSIC VERDICT

Why now? If you're persistent, you'll find it lurking second hand for just a few quid...
Final thought Beauty could have made it a classic, but ugliness couldn't kill it.

The Top 5

SOS trivia facts

1 East meets west
The characters are entirely Western, but the city is clearly Japanese – the toppled flyovers and tumbled highrises are pure Kobe.

2 Keith's creepy
Keith's 180-degree turn is so quick it looks like his face just grows out the back of his head. Upsetting.

3 Name game
In Japan it was Zettai Zetsumei Toshi, which translates as 'a totally ruined city'. For the US it became Disaster Report – while here it was SOS.

4 Double unlucky
There's a sequel with floods instead of earthquakes, variously called Raw Danger, SOS The Final Escape 2 or Disaster Report 2. It's even harder to find – try France.

5 Pointer sister
There's a custom compass near Karen's house like a flower – ahhh. In fact, there are at least 35 weird compasses dotted around the place.

HUNT THEM DOWN.
REMEMBER BE POLITE & NO STALKING.
PAIR!
FIND YOUR MATCH IN THE LIST BELOW &
HUNT THEM DOWN
REMEMBER BE POLITE & NO STALKING.

Sauce D.J: bet she's mad for Genji

"It's got console gaming into the gossip columns"

PLAYSTATION NATION

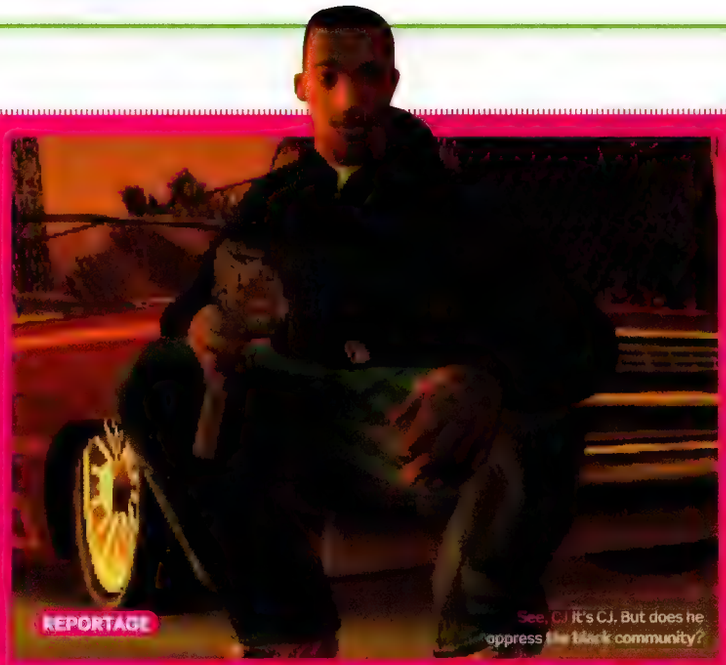
Rock royalty crash 3Rooms

Sony's new cred-chasing ways a success, but it's got console gaming into the gossip columns. London's gutter-clogging freesheets report celebrities, including Noel Fielding of the Mighty Boosh, Pixie Geldof and Towers Of London – rock 'hellraisers' fronted by Celebrity Big Brother haircut Donny Tourette – showed up at Marmalade magazine's February shindig at Sony's Shoreditch party pad 3Rooms. "The Tourettes looked out of it," an onlooker told The London Paper, "But Pixie looked like she could party all night." Sadly, it appears the detailed dissection of their respective *Resistance: Fall Of Man* multi-player strategies were left on the cutting-room floor.

Still, the night, put on as part of Marmalade's collaboration with Sony, seemed to go with a bang. The magazine used Sony hardware to launch their MySpace edition – an issue comprised entirely of contributions from users of the popular social networking site. "It felt like everyone wanted to come down and see the 3Rooms space," says Marmalade editor Kirsty Robinson. "We had the paparazzi outside and everything, but they didn't spot everyone who was there." There might even have been some gamers there too. Maybe.

Rooms with a view 3Rooms – Sony's PS3-laden party pad in London.

"*God Of War* has won 52 different industry awards. 52!"



Games make villains of black youth?

That's the assessment of Richard O'Jones of US website Black Voice News, who declares that violent games "reinforce poor self-images" in the Afro American community. On one hand, this comes off as more lazy, editorial about games corrupting the soft minds of our precious kids – Jones cites the example of Carl Johnson, the murder-happy star of *GTA: SA* although we didn't hear him complaining on behalf of the Italian American community when Tommy Vercetti was shooting up the town.

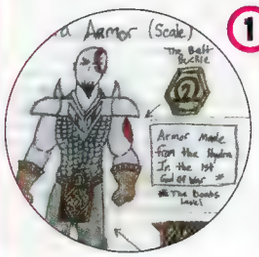
But his point that only 3% of programmers are black might offer some food for thought. "Presently, the game industry is dominated by white males earning a six-figure income off grown men, like my black adult male relatives sitting at home playing," argues Jones. And evidently, the industry thinks Jones might have a point – industry figures met at the Games Developers Conference at a seminar called Diversity: The Window Of Opportunity to discuss the issue of racial diversity in gaming. No, now is really not the time to say how much you're keen to play *Def Jam: Icon*

On tour The website that claims games reinforce "poor self-images" in black people

FASHION

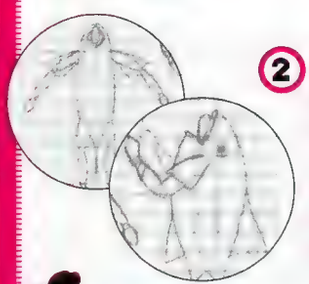
God Of War 2 fish costume revealed

OK, so the original game let you dress as a cow, but in *God Of War 2* you can tackle the Colossus of Rhodes – or the hidden sex minigame – dressed as a giant fish. How? Thank www.us.playstation.com, who ran a competition asking US gamers to design secret costumes for Kratos, unlocked when you complete the game. Sadly, these fairly miserable efforts were the best they could do, with all three, incredibly, making it into the finished game – just complete the Story mode on any difficulty level to unlock them. Better yet, complete the game on Titan mode to unlock the Athena costume, or achieve God ranking in Challenge mode to receive the God armour, doubling all your stats. Turn to page 114 now to see why PSM3's Dave Cook didn't win. He *loves* drawing. Loves it.



1 Hydra Armour

This child – well, we're praying it's not the work of a grown up – scores high for concept, less so for execution. His costume is made from the skin of the Hydra in *God Of War's* famous opening level. Neat idea, eh? Shame his drawing makes even Dave feel a bit smug.

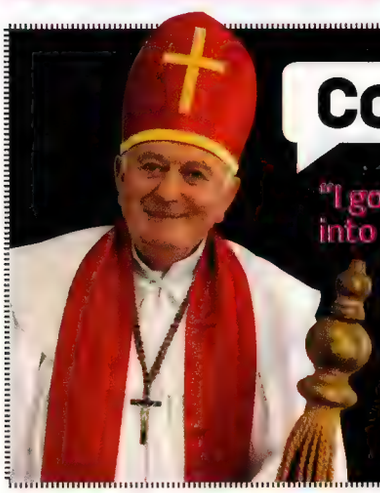


2 Cod of war

Hilarious pun aside – which we actually wish we'd thought of first, but, hey... – this is pretty decent, especially when worn during the dual nymph pleasuring sex minigame. Want to come back to my plaice, ladies? Ho ho.

3 Weird yellow stripe

Well, we wish we'd thought of it. Stare at Kratos for three seconds, wait for a monkey to unicycle through a library in your empty brain, then draw a giant *yellow* stripe where the red one used to be. Note: this is how ad agencies work. This is the lamest thing ever.



Confess!

"I got stuck a second into *Metal Gear*"

By: Crafty100
psm3mag.com

EMAIL PSM3
Got a confession? Then we'll print it. Email us: psm3@futurenet.co.uk

Unburden yourself
I was sick of playing *FIFA 06* on my PSone so I bought the first *Metal Gear Solid*. I was so excited. I put the game in, watched the intro and then I was in control of Snake in his diving suit, behind a water tank on the docks under Shadow Moses.

I see. What then?
So my adventure had begun. But... I didn't know where to go. I ran to the other side of the dock and tried to climb up, but Snake wouldn't do it. Then I ran around in the water like an idiot. There was a ration down there so I assumed that was the way to go. Maybe there was a hole to swim under?

You, my son, are a dumbass
But despite my furious attempts to escape the first part of the level, I was stuck. Stuck and lost and confused and angry. I wanted to elbow-drop my PSone. I kept turning it off in frustration and wandering off before crawling back for another go, determined to escape.

Enlightenment!
Then, finally, I realised that by pressing ⊗ Snake would duck. Then by moving forward he'd go prone. I crawled through the space right next to where I started and kicked myself. D'oh! What an idiot.

ON THE DISC
Check out the PS2 reviews section for the latest games

PS2 Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
FIRST-PERSON SHOOTERS	**TIMESPLITTERS 2** **Pub** Eidos	**Dev** Free Radical **Web** eidos.co.uk "Every bullet leaves a scar or impact point, every object can be interacted with or destroyed. Brilliant." **PSM3 Rating** 95%	**HALF-LIFE** **Pub** Vivendi	**Dev** Valve	**Web** valvesoftware.com "The monsters are brilliantly designed, with each one matching a particular weapon that spells their deaths." **PSM3 Rating** 90%	**BLACK** **Pub** EA	**Dev** Criterion	**Web** black.ea.com "*Black* offers unparalleled explosive thrills, but it lacks somewhat in context or emotional depth." **PSM3 Rating** 89%
RETRO	**STREET FIGHTER ALPHA ANTHOLOGY** **Pub** Capcom	**Dev** Capcom **Web** capcom.com "This is worth the asking price for *Street Fighter Alpha 3* and *Pocket Fighter* alone. Best *SF* experience on PS2." **PSM3 Rating** 80%	**ALIEN HOMINID** **Pub** Zoo Digital	**Dev** The Behemoth	**Web** alienhominid.com "*Hominid* really makes you work. Every minute you stay alive is an achievement almost unparalleled." **PSM3 Rating** 74%	**MIDWAY ARCADE: TREASURES 2** **Pub** Midway	**Dev** Midway	**Web** midwayarcade.com "Got rose-tinted spectacles hanging from a sagging face? This is a bargain." **PSM3 Rating** 71%
ROLE-PLAYING GAMES	**FINAL FANTASY XII** **Pub** Square Enix	**Dev** Square Enix	**Web** finalfantasyxii.com "It's everything you'd expect from an *FF* game, and everything you'd expect from a great adventure." **PSM3 Rating** 94%	**KINGDOM HEARTS 2** **Pub** Square Enix	**Dev** Square Enix **Web** kh2.co.uk "Excels on every level and sweats charm. Hate RPGs? Then this could well change your mind." **PSM3 Rating** 94%	**DRAGON QUEST** **Pub** Square Enix	**Dev** Level 5 **Web** dragonquest8.com "An old-fashioned game that eschews modern trends in favour of vintage role-playing." **PSM3 Rating** 90%
ACTION	**GRAND THEFT AUTO: SAN ANDREAS** **Pub** Rockstar	**Dev** Rockstar	**Web** gta-sanandreas.com "*GTA*'s not perfect, but it's the single greatest achievement on PS2. You may not love it, but you have to respect it." **PSM3 Rating** 99%	**CANIS CANEM EDIT** **Pub** Rockstar	**Dev** Rockstar **Web** rockstargames.com "Jimmy is one of the most charismatic characters ever. It goes right to the top of the class" **PSM3 Rating** 93%	**GOD OF WAR 2** **Pub** SCEE	**Dev** SCEA **Web** godofwargame.com "Like running eyes-first into a wall of beauty, *God Of War 2* is another PS2 masterpiece. Captivating." **PSM3 Rating** 93%

Not in the books Games that rewrite history

CRABS

Genji: Days Of The Blade

Pub Sony | **Dev** Game Republic
Web us.playstation.com
The obvious one. As acknowledged by the developers in PSM85, feudal Japan had a distinct *lack* of giant crabs roaming the landscape, crushing all-comers. Still, who needs to stick to boring old *facts*, eh?
PSM3 Rating 60%

STONE

Spartan: Total Warrior

Pub Sega | **Dev** Creative Assembly
Web sega.com
Historians say nothing about the Romans kidnapping Medusa and using her powers to build a massive laser gun so they can turn hordes of men into stone at once. *Nothing.*
PSM3 Rating 88%

MAGIC

Dynasty Warriors 5: Xtreme Legends

Pub Koei | **Dev** Koei
Web dw5xl.com
At what point the ancient Chinese battlefields were thronged with wizards chucking powerful magic rays all over the shop we're not sure, but it's not in any textbooks.
PSM3 Rating 45%

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Back issues
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Why didn't anyone buy...?

They released it... no-one bought it. We explain

Steambot Chronicles

Pub 505 Game Street | **Dev** Irem
Web bumpytrot.com (no, *really*, it is)

OK, in brief, the reason no-one bought *Steambot Chronicles* is because it's an obscure Japanese RPG released over here on a tiny label. But you should all be looking for a copy – and here's why.

Steambot Chronicles has as much variety and as rich a world as *San Andreas*. Fact. And in this world, you can do these things and more: ride and customise giant robots (the steambots) and fight in an arena setting, placing bets on the outcome. You can join a band (The Garland Globetrotters) and play pretty much any instrument you desire – guitar, sax, drums and so on. You'll play gigs and, whatever instrument you choose to strum/tootle/whack, you'll get a different rhythm action minigame. You can try and pull the girls in the Globetrotters, thus sparking inter-band ructions. You can dress yourself however you like, from white-suited fop to a bloke running about in swimming trunks and a chef's hat. You can be an absolute *bastard* if you like – find a homeless nun protecting three orphans in a run-down shack in the middle of the desert? Why not claim to own the place and demand rent on pains of immediate eviction? You can play the property market, be a taxi driver, join criminal gangs and take them down from within... and that's just a small sample of things to do. Sounds good? It is. So track down a copy immediately.

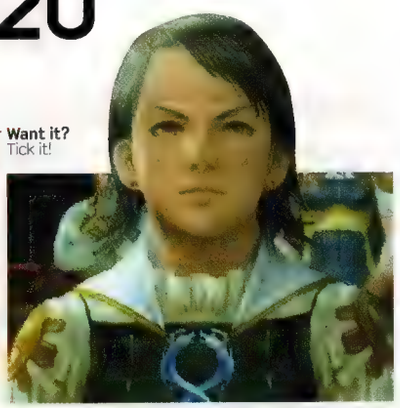
EMAIL PSM3 @
Want to champion a game here? Let us know.
psm3@futurenet.co.uk

PlayStation 2 Top 20

This month's big retail winners and losers

01	(01)	Final Fantasy XII	Square ENIX	Reviewed PSM82 94%
02	(02)	FIFA 07	EA	Reviewed PSM80 84%
03	(03)	Ghost Rider	2K Games	Reviewed PSM85 58%
04	(05)	Pro Evolution Soccer 6	Konami	Reviewed PSM79 91%
05	(08)	Call Of Duty 3	Activision	Reviewed PSM82 88%
06	(04)	Need For Speed: Carbon	EA	Reviewed PSM82 82%
07	(07)	Lego Star Wars 2	Eidos	Reviewed PSM82 81%
08	(09)	Smackdown Vs Raw 2007	THQ	Reviewed PSM82 80%
09	(06)	Avatar: The Legend Of Aang	THQ	Reviewed N/A
10	NEW	The Fast And The Furious: Tokyo Drift	EA	Reviewed PSM86 51%
11	(10)	Buzz: The Big Quiz	Sony	Reviewed PSM68 74%
12	(12)	Guitar Hero 2	Red Octane	Reviewed PSM82 82%
13	(11)	Scarface: The World Is Yours	VU Games	Reviewed PSM81 89%
14	(16)	PDC World Championship Darts	Oxygen	Reviewed PSM83 61%
15	(13)	The Sims 2: Pets	EA	Reviewed PSM82 53%
16	(14)	World Snooker Championship 2007	Sega	Reviewed PSM83 80%
17	(17)	Buzz: The Music Quiz	Sony	Reviewed PSM68 84%
18	NEW	Buzz: Junior Jungle Party	Sony	Reviewed PSM80 68%
19	(15)	Okami	Capcom	Reviewed PSM84 95%
20	(18)	Naruto: Ultimate Ninja	Namco	Reviewed PSM83 77%

Want it? Tick it!

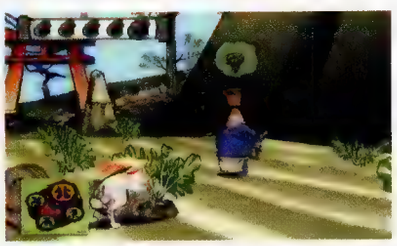


The *Final* countdown

Finally, something that's not *FIFA*, *NFS* or *Pro Evo* at the top of the charts. The last *Final Fantasy* on PS2, this, but what a cracking way to go...

Carbon copy

Aren't all those *NFS* games games enough for you lot? Apparently not, for now you're buying *Tokyo Drift*, EA's rip-off of *their own game*. Criminy.



No justice

Oh, *come on*. *Okami*, the work of delirious grandeur, being outsold by three ancient *Buzz* games, *Snooker* and frigging *PDC Darts*? Criminal. Sort it out. Now.

170,000

That's how many copies of the execrable *Gundam* have been sold in Japan. They're clearly mad.

You're playing...

Anto McCann
It's all role-playing games round young Anto's way...

1 **Final Fantasy XII** "It's *Final Fantasy* – need I say more? Just buy it."
2 **Kingdom Hearts 2** "Awesome. The last battle has a really epic feel to it."
3 **Shin Megami Tensai: Digital Devil Saga** "I played the last *MegaTen* game and really enjoyed it, so I got this one."

We're playing...

David Cook
Trucks, twee RPGs and brutal killing – Dave's complex...

1 **MotorStorm** "Still the best PS3 launch game as far as I'm concerned. Great fun."
2 **Steambot Chronicles** "One of last year's best games. Look to the left to see why."
3 **God Of War 2** "After all the niceness of the games above, I need some harsh violence. Grr."

They're playing...

Ed Boon
Mortal Kombat man likes *Mortal Kombat*. Surprising, eh?

1 **Guitar Hero 2** "Can't get enough of this game. Greatest party game ever."
2 **God Of War** "I haven't had a chance to catch up on this great title until now. One of PS2's best."
3 **Mortal Kombat Armaggedon** "I'm really into playing against other people's created fighters online."

ON THE DISC
Want to see the latest PSP

PSP Playlist

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
PLATFORMERS	**DAXTER** **Pub** SCEE	**Dev** Ready at Dawn **Web** naughtydog.com "Looks and plays so much like *Jak 2* that it's a bit unnerving. Get it." **PSM3 Rating** 86%	**MEGAMAN POWERED UP** **Pub** Capcom **Dev** Capcom **Web** megaman.co.uk "Monstrously hard and requires the dexterity of a cyborg concert pianist. Playable." **PSM3 Rating** 78%	**KAO CHALLENGERS** **Pub** Atari **Dev** Tate Interactive **Web** kaothekangaroo.com "Nicks ideas from all over the place, but it won't be long before you find yourself enjoying it." **PSM3 Rating** 69%
FOOTBALL	**FOOTBALL MANAGER HANDHELD 2007** **Pub** Sega **Dev** Sports Interactive **Web** sigames.com "Takes last year's version and builds on it. Exceeds expectations and stands tall." **PSM3 Rating** 86%	**PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 6** **Pub** Konami **Dev** Konami **Web** pesfan.com "By no means perfect, but PES6 is essential for fans of the series. More than enough reason to take PSP on a journey." **PSM3 Rating** 84%	**FIFA '06** **Pub** EA **Dev** EA **Web** easports..com/games/fifa06 "The camera works well, the atmosphere is realistic and the Season mode provides great depth" **PSM3 Rating** 81%
WI-FI	**VIRTUA TENNIS WORLD TOUR** **Pub** Sega **Dev** Sumo Digital **Web** sega.com "*Virtua Tennis* experts will demolish you with shots you wouldn't believe, leaving you swearing like McEnroe." **PSM3 Rating** 91%	**BURNOUT LEGENDS** **Pub** EA **Dev** Team Fusion **Web** ea com "If you want a fast, fun racer with great online play, then this is it. It's got loads to do." **PSM3 Rating** 92%	**SOCOM: FIRETEAM BRAVO** **Pub** SCEE **Dev** Zipper **Web** socom-game.com "An awesome online mode lets you boss the virtual war zone with a group of your mates. Terrific." **PSM3 Rating** 83%
DRIVING	**OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST** **Pub** Sega **Dev** Sumo Digital **Web** outrun2006.com "Sheer magical fun, from its ridiculous graphics to its stupidly colourful graphics. The most fun you'll have in ages." **PSM3 Rating** 89%	**BURNOUT LEGENDS** **Pub** EA **Dev** Team Fusion **Web** ea.com "The best bits of *Burnout* 1, 2 and 3 on your PSP. How good is that? Bloody good. Brilliant, edgy and massively fast." **PSM3 Rating** 92%	**RIDGE RACER** **Pub** SCEI **Dev** Namco **Web** namco.com "It's hard to imagine a better showcase for PSP's capabilities than *Ridge Racer*." **PSM3 Rating** 88%

Ships of fools PS2's finest ocean-based transport

DESSERT

Hitman: Blood Money

Pub Eidos **Dev** IO Interactive
Web hitmanbloodmoney.com
The 'Death On The Mississipi' level sees old baldy merrily throwing bad guys over the railings into the river, before getting all culinary on their ass and poisoning their boss' big cake. Just another day at work...
PSM3 Rating 93%

MULTI-HEADED

God Of War

Pub Sony **Dev** Sony
Web godofwargame.com
A knackered old ship on the Aegean sea is where Kratos starts out, rescuing trapped sailors and kicking twelve bells out of a massive Hydra. Quite possibly the most enthralling opening stage of any game on PlayStation 2.
PSM3 Rating 92%

WET

Cold Fear

Pub Ubisoft **Dev** Darkworks
Web coldfeargame.com
If you're a member of the US Coast Guard, being sent to check on a mysteriously empty Russian frigate probably isn't a good gig. Cue loads of zombies and the most spectacular 'sea crashing over the deck' effects ever. Underrated, this one.
PSM3 Rating 83%

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Nice Apps

Trick up your console

Full charge

App Controller charging dock
Web 4gamers.net

The launch of PlayStation 3 means, inevitably, a barge of third-party merchandise comes floating downstream. Leading this charge – and that's a really clever joke, and you'll see why in a sec – is this pad recharging dock (see) for your Sixaxis pads. Pad running low on battery? Stick it in this dock for some rechargo-excitement. And that's about it, really. There's a USB lead included so you can connect the unit to your console, it glows blue when it's turned on, and you can change the colour of its little LEDs. Now that's the future of technology, right there.

Feeling blue

App PSP bluetooth headset
Web logitec.co.jp

There have been a few Bluetooth headsets for PSP up to now, but this is the first particularly decent one. The unit sits snugly beneath your PSP, powered by a single AAA battery, and you can flip between phone calls and your PSP content from a range of up to ten metres, although in what universe it's even possible to play PSP games from ten metres away, we're not sure. It's not cheap, although these things rarely are, but it does come in silver or black. Given that your PSP is black (probably) we can hazard a guess at which one you'd most likely go for.

Stand up

App Glowing PS3 stand
Web gameseek.co.uk

This is going to sound spectacularly useless, but bear with us. What this is, is a stand to allow your PS3 to be stored vertically. Now, you're going to say that PS3 stands vertically anyway, aren't you? And you'd be right. But does it glow blue while it does so? No, it doesn't, and yes, there is an odd blue theme in this column this month. Anyway, you spend 20 quid on this, and enjoy a lovely warming blue glow while you're playing *MotorStorm*. And that's got to be worth the money, right? Oh.

Stand and deliver
OK, your PS3 can stand up *anyway*, but still...

Early Warning System

Your PlayStation release schedule

Game	Publisher	Out	Format	Want it? Tick it!
God Of War 2	Sony	April 13	PS2	☐
Superbike World Championship 07	Koch Media	April 13	PS2	☐
Ratchet And Clank: Size Matters	Konami	April 13	PSP	☐
The Cube	D3	April 13	PSP	☐
World Championship Poker 2	Oxygen	April 13	PSP	☐
Tony Hawk's Project 8	Activision	April 13	PSP	☐
Capcom Puzzle World	Capcom	April 13	PSP	☐
Free Running	Ubisoft/Reef	April 13	PS2	☐
F.E.A.R.	VU Games	April 20	PS3	☐
Oblivion	Ubisoft	April 27	PS3	☐
Rainbow Six: Vegas		April 27		☐
Pac-Man Rally	EA	April 27	PSP	☐
Spider-Man 3	Activision	May 4	PS3	☐
SOCOM: Fireteam Bravo 2	Sony	May 11	PSP	☐
SOCOM: Combined Assault	Sony	May 11	PS2	☐
Manhunt 2	Rockstar	May 11	PS2	☐
Saint's Row	THQ	May 18		☐
Tomb Raider: Anniversary	Eidos	May 25	PS2	☐
Dave Mirra BMX Challenge	Crave	May 25	PSP	☐
Great Battles Of Rome	Black Bean	June 1	PS2	☐
Ghost Recon Advanced Warfighter 2	Ubisoft	June 1	PS3	☐
Armored Core 4	505 Game Street	June 1	PS3	☐
Skate	EA	June 1	PS3	☐
Battlefield 3: Bad Company	EA	June 1	PS3	☐
Driver '76	Ubisoft	June 1	PSP	☐
Harry Potter: Order Of The Phoenix	EA	June 1	PS2	☐
Lost	Ubisoft	June 1	PS2	☐
Ape Escape: Million Monkeys	Sony	June 8	PS2	☐
ATV Offroad Fury 4	Sony	June 8	PS2	☐
NBA 07	Sony	June 8	PS2	☐
Rogue Galaxy	Sony	June 8	PS2	☐
The Darkness	2K Games	June 29	PS3	☐
Army Of Two	EA	June 29	PS3	☐
Assassin's Creed	Ubisoft	August 31	PS3	☐
Brothers In Arms: Hell's Highway	Ubisoft	August 31	PS3	☐
Medal Of Honor: Airborne	EA	Sep 7	PS3	☐
Warhawk		Sep 7	PS3	☐
Metal Gear Solid: Portable Ops	Konami	Sep 7	PSP	☐
CSI: Three Dimensions Of Murder	Ubisoft	Sep 7	PS2	☐
Silent Hill: Origins	Konami	Oct 26	PSP	☐

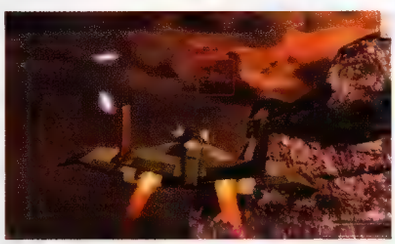
Caution: all release dates are accurate at time of press but liable to drastic change

Rainbow Six Vegas

It's the Rainbow Six – in Vegas. Exactly what it says on the tin, in other words. Looks lovely so far, but we've never exactly gone mad for *R6* – so we'll see.

Saint's Row

It's the first urban crime game on PS3. Pretty popular on Xbox, the PS3 version should be equally good. Review coming to these pages soon as we can get it.



Warhawk

As announced recently at GDC, *Warhawk* is now an exclusively online game and it's the only game so far that makes good use of the tilt-pad. More soon.

eBay Going, Going, Gone PlayStation auction action

Sonic neon bar sign

We're not sure what sort of drink you'd buy from a pub sporting a neon Sonic sign directly above the bar. "Good evening, barlord. I'll have a hedgehog juice and tonic and a packet of pork scratchings, please." Up next for the Sega-loving publican: Tails-flavoured crisps and a Shadow-branded condom machine. Perhaps.

Sold No **Original Price** $3.99
Profit None

Claire Redfield figurine

From a bloke flogging a worrying amount of 'saucy' female statuettes, there's this actually quite smart Claire Redfield from *Resi* figure. She looks a bit less businesslike than the 'real' Redfield, but this wouldn't be a bad addition to the collection of any lover of game-related toys. We'd rather a figure of the Merchant, mind. But what a profit. Well done, that man.

Sold $1.50 **Original Price** $103.51
Profit $102.01

Tomb Raider slot machine

This is a slotty that, apparently, "brings something new to each player". That new thing being, of course, bankruptcy. Still, it's a nice-looking piece of kit that's supposedly very popular in Japan. Operated by tokens and "newly painted outside and cleaned inside", it's perfect for the inveterate gambler who's managed to lose all his money on online poker. Someone like Milf, then.

Sold $25.00 **Original Price** $91.00
Profit $66

ON THE DISC
See what PS3 is capable of on your free DVD

PS3 Playlist

FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE

TOP THREE

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Insomniac
Web us.playstation.com
"An incredibly slick, exciting PS3 showcase. A beautiful vision of an alien-infested Britain. Terrific stuff."
PSM3 Rating 89%

MOTORSTORM
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Evolution
Web motorstorm.com
"Tough, dynamic racing. A blistering thrill ride that makes good on all of PlayStation 3's promises."
PSM3 Rating 88%

VIRTUA FIGHTER 5
Pub | Sega | **Dev** AM2
Web sega.com/vf5
"Perhaps the best scrapper ever, but *VF5* is *such* an acquired taste. Still, technically this is flawless."
PSM3 Rating 87%

FOUR TO SIX

VIRTUA TENNIS 3
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Web sega.com
"No online play, but still the best multi-player game on PS3. A must-buy for *Virtua Tennis* fans everywhere."
PSM3 Rating 85%

CALL OF DUTY 3
Pub Activision | **Dev** Trayarch
Web callofduty.com
"The only additions PS3 offers above the PS2 game is shinier, sharper graphics. Still, the next-gen starts here."
PSM3 Rating 82%

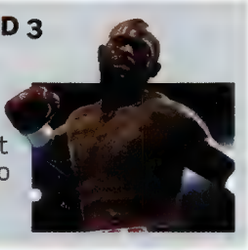
TIGER WOODS 07
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com/tigerwoods07
"Still the best console golf game, but trapped in the bunker of its own success. It's all very familiar fare."
PSM3 Rating 81%

SEVEN TO NINE

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Neversoft
Web tonyhawksproject8.com
"A solid, back-to-basics return to the glory days of the Hawk. He's still delivering the goods."
PSM3 Rating 80%

RIDGE RACER 7
Pub | Sony | **Dev** Namco
Web ridgeracer7.net
"The ultimate *Ridge* – glowing with power and delivering exactly want you want."
PSM3 Rating 79%

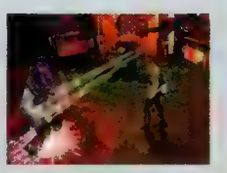
FIGHT NIGHT ROUND 3
Pub | EA | **Dev** EA
Web easports.com
"Fundamentally no different to the PlayStation 2 game, but worth it if you're new to *Round 3*."
PSM3 Rating 78%



TEN AND ELEVEN

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SNOOKER
Pub | Sega | **Dev** Sega
Web wsc2007.sega-europe.com
"The same as the PS2 game. Excellent fun, but *World Champ Snooker* looks absolutely *shocking*."
PSM3 Rating 75%

MARVEL: ULTIMATE ALLIANCE
Pub | Activision | **Dev** Raven
Web marvelultimatealliance.com
"Lets the power of PS3 slip through its fingers, but pretty much essential if you're a Marvel fan."
PSM3 Rating 72%



PSM3'S MOST WANTED — HAZE
Pub | Ubisoft | **Dev** Free Radical
Web hazegame.uk.ubi.com
It's all been quiet on this intriguing FPS of late. We'll have more news soon.

AVOID

MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM: TARGET IN SIGHT
"This is one of the worst games we've played for ages. A disgrace on pretty much every level."
PSM3 Rating 28%

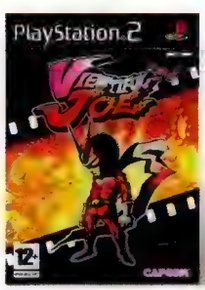
FULL AUTO 2: BATTLELINES
"A budget PlayStation 2 game wearing its big sister's high-definition make-up. Stick to *Burnout*."
PSM3 Rating 36%

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG
"You'll start crying when you remember what Sonic games used to be like in the '90s."
PSM3 Rating 47%

Super men The toppermost superhero games around

WEBBED

Spider-Man 2
Pub Activision | **Dev** Treyarch
Web activision.com
Easily PlayStation 2's finest superhero title, just flinging yourself about the city on your webs offers more excitement than 95% of other games. Throw in great boss battles and loads of variety, and you've got something special.
PSM3 Rating 92%



CARTOONY

Viewtiful Joe
Pub Capcom | **Dev** Clover
Web viewtifuljoe.co.uk
Not a hero in anything outside his own games – though there are few PS2 stars more suitable for a TV show – Joe has all the essential skills anyway: he can throw billions of punches a second, slow time and, erm, chuck pink boomerangs...
PSM3 Rating 88%

GRUESOME

The Punisher
Pub THQ | **Dev** Volition
Web thepunisher.com
Stretching the definition of 'superhero' to its limits he may, but you're not going to mess with a guy who'll throw people into wood chippers or hold them head-first in a deep fat fryer without the merest twinge from his conscience.
PSM3 Rating 82%

@ **Got a PS3 question?** Then we'll answer it. Send your next-gen console queries to: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "PS3 question!"

Next month

The next incredible issue of PSM3 goes on sale **Thursday, May 10**

Now Showing

Movies for your console

DVD New on DVD

Eragon

Director Stefan Fangmeier | **Starring** Edward Speleers, Jeremy Irons, Sienna Guillory

It's a bit of a dry month for DVD releases, to be honest. Still, this is a decent enough film to pass the time with. Small boy inherits the last dragon, heads off to battle evil. Worth a rental, but we wouldn't actually buy it. Though we're very tight.

UMD selection

Spider-Man: The New Animated Series

Director Steve Ditko | **Starring** Neil Patrick-Harris, Lisa Loeb, Ian Ziering, Jeffrey Combs, Ethan Embry

Oh. Oh, dear. If it's a dry month for DVDs, it's Sahara-like for UMDs. There aren't any actual movies out at all this time around, but there's this, a 13-episode show that ran on MTV for one season four years ago. One season, you'll notice, and only one. This is because it's a bit on the tripe side of things. Still, this month you've only got this or a set of The Offspring's musc vids. Take your pick.

Blu-ray choice

Corpse Bride

Director: Tim Burton | **Starring** Johnny Depp, Helena Bonham-Carter, Emily Watson

You've probably bought up every big-budget extravaganza you can get on Blu-ray by now – to show off your shiny new tech – so time for a change of pace. It's Corpse Bride, Tim Burton's utterly ace animated flick about a posh bloke (Johnny Depp) running away from his betrothed on the eve of his wedding, and ending up stranded in the netherworld, engaged to a dead girl. But who hasn't been there, eh? Brilliant. Get it.

PSM3 Tunes Where you get great music for free

Phantom Limb

The Shins

Typically breezy Beach Boys-esque pop from everyone's favourite band named after a part of the leg. Ideal music for summer picnics.

Get it: subpop.com

We Throw Parties, You Throw Knives

Los Campesinos

This would be in for the title alone, but handily this is also a lovely piece of sing-song indie rock. All together, now: "It's my party and I'll die if I want to." Smart.

Get it: loscampesinos.com

Translate

Yourcodenameis:milo

A chugging, repetitive guitar racket, which thumps louder than an elephant falling down the stairs. Screaming, aggressive stuff for screaming, aggressive men.

Get it: yourcodenameismilo.com

Backfire At The Disco

The Wombats

Despite the terrible band name, we like the fizzy pop cocktail that is Backfire At The Disco. Much better than Panic! At The Disco, deffo.

Get it: myspace.com/thewombatsuk

Bicycle, Bicycle, You Are My Bicycle

Be Your Own Pet

This is actually the video for this nugget of shouty teen brat-rock, so ideal for those of you with fancy video iPods. Daft, but great.

Get it: beyourownpet.net

@ Tune-up Send us your music links and we'll stick 'em in the mag. Email: psm3@futurenet.co.uk. Subject line: "Music!"

Object of Desire

Watch your entire DVD collection on the coach to your nan's...

Archos 704 Portable media player

If there's one thing PS3 definitely isn't, it's portable. This, obviously, is where PSP is meant to come in, but even the biggest memory stick on the market isn't enough to hold all the movies, photos and music you might be after. Which is where the Archos 704 comes into play.

With Wi-Fi, internet access and a touch-screen built in, this piece of kit has an 80gb hard drive – that's enough to hold approximately 70 DVD-quality movies, 40000 songs or 800,000 photos. There's 25 hours of battery life, too, which should be enough to fill even the longest of tedious train journeys. It also works as a camcorder and comes with video editing abilities so you can hone your masterpiece (or your video of you and your mates pissing about with *SingStar*) to perfection.

So you can download pretty much anything you like from your PC or PS3 to the 704 and go. Terrific, all in all.

Tech Spec

Price £283
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Web archos.com

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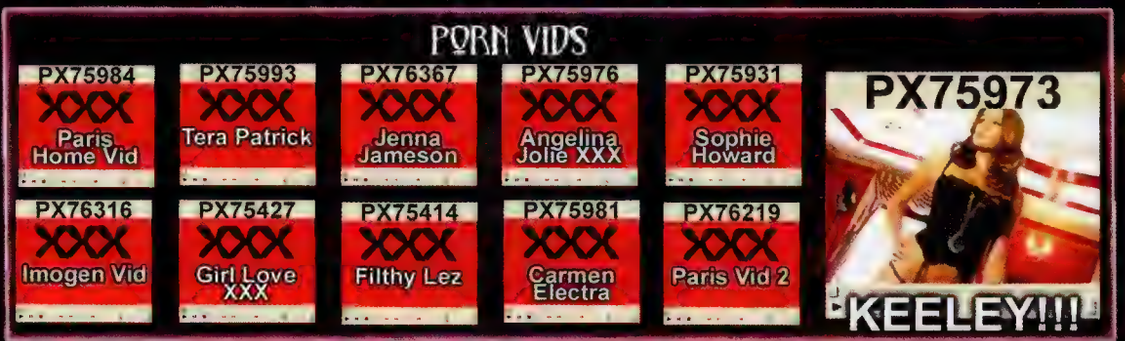

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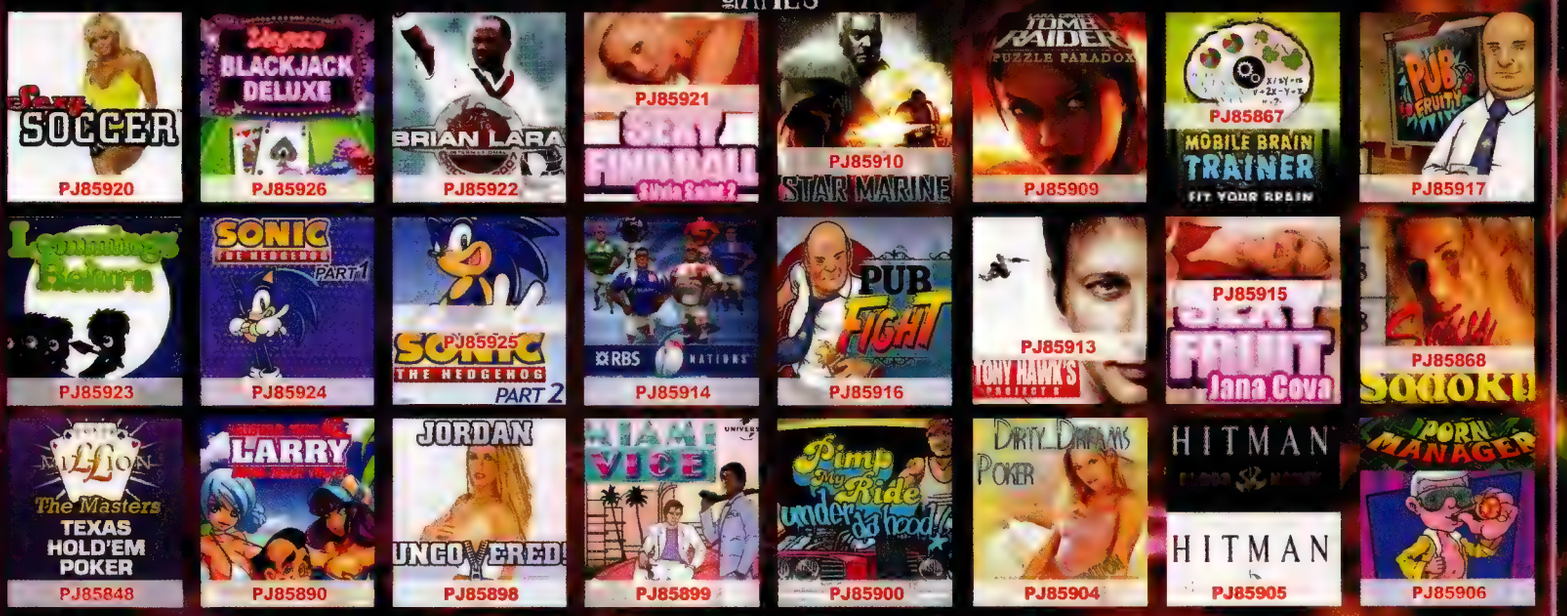

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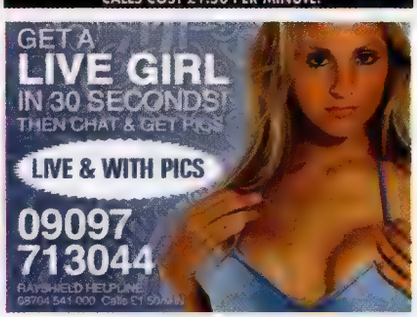

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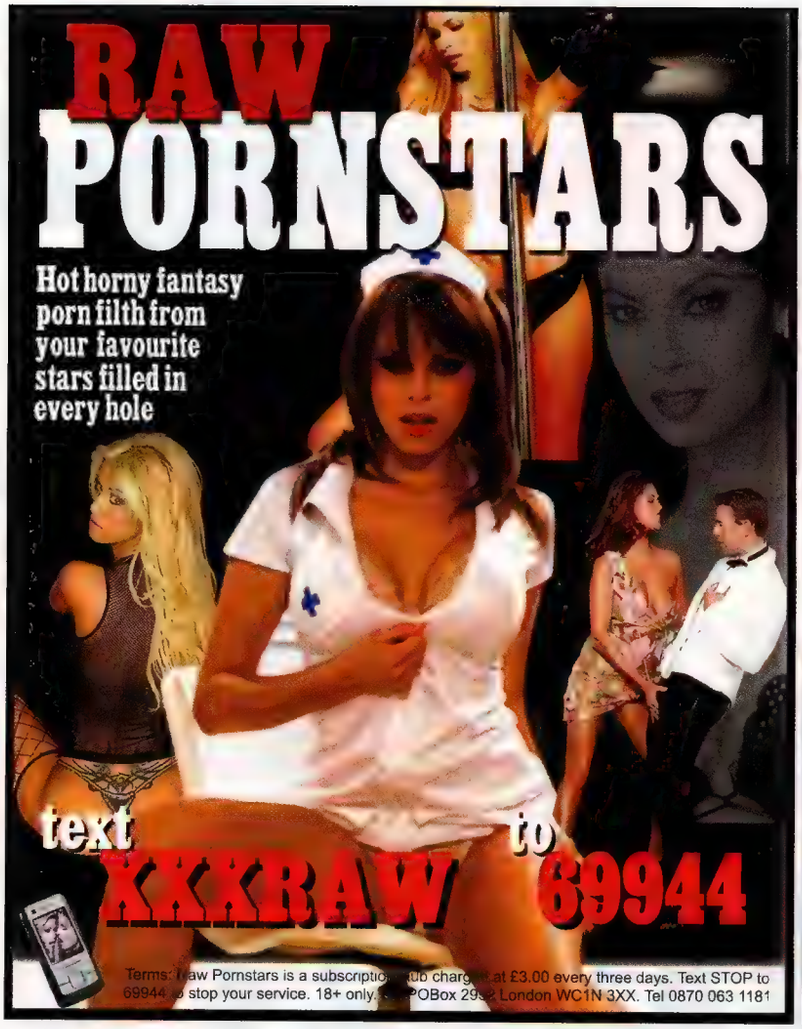

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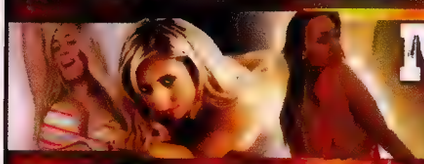

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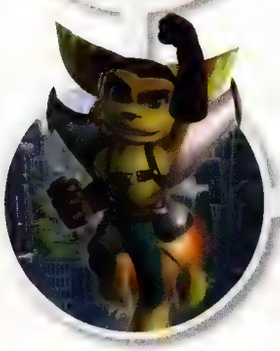
5 things to remember this month

Devil May Cry 4 is incredible
"Does things PS2 could never handle"
page 22

Oblivion is absolutely bloody massive
"Where the hell do you go? Well, that's entirely up to you..."
page 54



Ratchet: Size Matters could save PSP
"So few other games on PSP are this slickly programmed"
page 60

You can be anyone you please in *Home*
"Expect to see Hitler strutting round when the service is live"
Supplement

FFXII is incredibly beautiful
"Faces so convincing it's likely you'll just stop and goggle"
page 88

Next issue on sale
Thursday May 10

IV

1. ***GTA4* – First images from PS3's biggest game**
2. *Tomb Raider Anniversary* – get the PSM3 verdict on Lara's new old PS2 game.
3. *Splinter Cell: Double Agent* – we review Sam Fisher's delayed PS3 adventure.
4. *Spider-Man 3* – Spidey's make-or-break PS3 debut taken apart.
5. And why *Hitman: Silent Assassin* has the best missions of any game ever.

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ABC PSM3 26,584 June to Dec 2006

New Killzone trailer exposed!

Exclusive screens from the GDC *Killzone 2* promo in 10.80i HD crayon.

Yes, although Sony banned all photography at their pre-GDC press briefing, we were fortunate enough to have PSM3 artist and memory-man-in-residence Prod Ed Dave Cook present at the event. So although we couldn't get any footage of the extraordinary trailer, he's used his awesome photographic mind to draw what went on in that magical minute of *Killzone 2* action. And as Dave's highly detailed, pin-sharp images prove, *that* E3 trailer actually sold *Killzone* short.

Old dog The appalling 'fake' *Killzone 2* shots from E3 are above. Look how much more expressive the facial models are in Dave's *in-game* images from GDC. Wow.

Thrillzone The GDC promo opens with the Helghast and the humans in battle – as you can clearly see above. It's *much* better than that E3 trailer, as any fool can see.

Dead man Oh no! The Helghast are winning thanks to the aggressive team-based flanking AI clearly demonstrated above. Note the improved death animations. Neat.

Tank you The stunning GDC demo tank sections make the E3 trailer look like a rubbish crayon drawing.

PSM3
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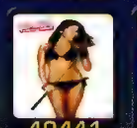
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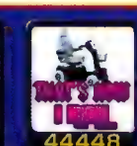

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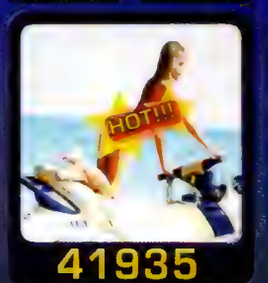

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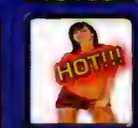

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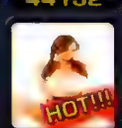

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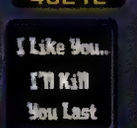

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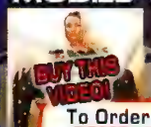

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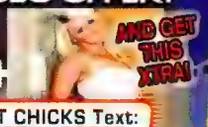

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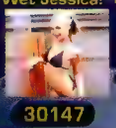
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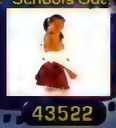
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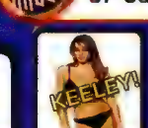

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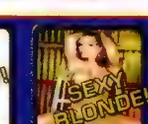

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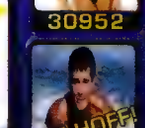

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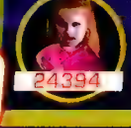
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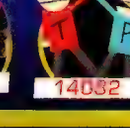
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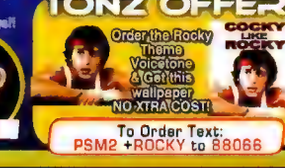

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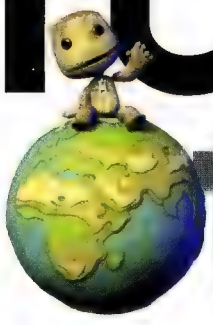
The 20 games that will shape the future of PS3



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PS3 Special

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The game to make PS3 sing with happiness

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The future of online PS3 gaming

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Co-op gaming gets a killer app

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KILLZONE 2
That GDC trailer revealed

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The one we're all waiting for

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THE CLUB
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The best value package on PS3

AFRIKA
Can you go on safari from *Home*?

RESIDENT EVIL 5
Still shrouded in mystery...

MAKING PS3 HAPPY

The saviour of Sixaxis is...

LocoRoco PS3

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** TBA

Exhibit one: a massively popular, impossibly cute PSP game about tilting things that needs a sequel. Exhibit two: a 'misunderstood' control pad that supports tilting and needs to get doubters onside. If we were Mr Sony, we'd have given the developers of *LocoRoco* ten million pounds to make this game, punched the air and taken the rest of the day off. It's not rocket science.

How much will it change? Producer Tsutomo Kouno played it pretty cagey at the Games Developers' Conference in San Francisco recently, but explained that he's planning to use physical calculations – meaning the fuzzy 3D 'Rocos you see here – and is hoping to incorporate new group AI into the next *Loco*. He also hinted that the music – you know the theme song's lyrics, right? – might play a more integral role, possibly responding to what you're doing on-screen. The most interesting murmur, though, is of a new race that complements the Rocos, working in tandem with them to reach trickier areas and incorporating co-op elements into the already-tricky gameplay. All together, now: 'Pacchonbo-mo-inoinoi chakaretapatton...'

Be happy This is the best game on PSP. Go and buy it.

Going Loco on PS3 > Fluffy 'rocos set to storm sequel

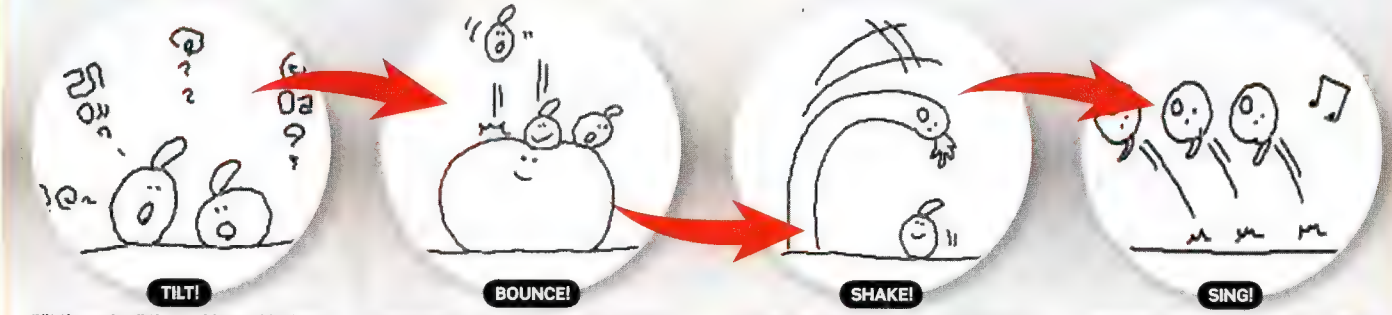
At GDC, we attended a lecture held by LocoRoco creator Tsutomo Kuono. In a slideshow depicting the creation of the original PSP game from early sketches through to fruition, he showed the picture to the right. This, he said, is the future of *LocoRoco*. PS3 will play host to these fuzzy creatures.

You can read more about *LocoRoco: The Furry Edition* (our title) on page 84 of the main mag this month, but – fuzzy though this picture is – the fur suggests that PS3 is very powerful when it comes to doing textures. Take a look at the zip-men of Little Big Planet for further evidence. But what will fur add to the game? Our guess? There'll be a velcro-like substance on some walls that you can climb up by sticking to it. Wait and see...

Caught by the fuzz These are the all-new furry LocoRocos.

"We bet there will be velcro for your furry Locos to stick to..."

Can I tilt it? > Actual design sketches from Loco Roco on PS3



TILT!
Tilt the pad, roll the world. But this sketch shows how you'll have to teach skills to your new PS3 chums via song.

BOUNCE!
We guess you'll shake the pad up and down to hurdle obstacles – or use your body as a trampoline for your rumoured new pals.

SHAKE!
The intuitive way to split Locos apart seems to be waggling the pad – but will you do this to join them together?

SING!
Maybe you could use the pitch and yaw to 'conduct' as the Rocos make their beautiful music? Come on, Sony...

LIVE A VIRTUAL EXISTENCE

Wave goodbye to MySpace with... Home

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** September

Ambitious? That's an understatement. With 'social networking' and 'user-generated content' looking like the buzzwords for 2007, Sony isn't so much jumping on the existing bandwagon as building its own band-tank, fitting it with nitrous feed and machine guns, and ploughing through the competition.

Available as a free download from the PlayStation store, *Home* adds its own icon to the cross-media bar and then opens like a game. From there, you leap into an environment that's similar to the virtual world of PC smash *Second Life*, where you're free to wander around chatting to people with your own avatar. Sony aren't stopping with barging into Linden Labs' corner of the market, though – they're also taking on the mighty YouTube, with a

Arcade fire There'll only be a few arcade games to start off with, but expect Sony to add more as time goes by.

The arcade

This is where you can meet up with friends to play free games like bowling, pool or retro arcade classics. Simply walking up to a table or cabinet activates them.

Other lounges

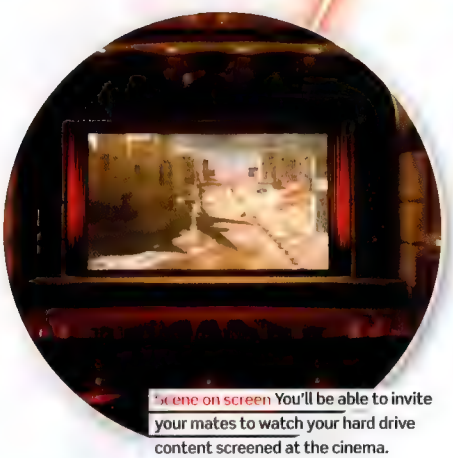
Companies will be able to create their own spaces to promote their products – so EA, say, might let you shoot hoops or practice your swing in their branded driving range. It isn't limited to games developers, so expect to see the likes of Adidas crafting their own palatial adver-dromes. Go capitalism!

Friends united Meet your mates online and chat about anything that crosses your mind. Well, *almost* anything.

Buddy up You'll be able to use voice chat, and arrange to meet people in the online game lobbies later.

Central Lounge

This is the main large social meeting space and your starting point in *Home*. If you're in a rush, you'll simply be able to communicate via emoticons and a Quick Write menu, but for more in-depth chat you can type with a USB keyboard or talk with a Bluetooth headset.

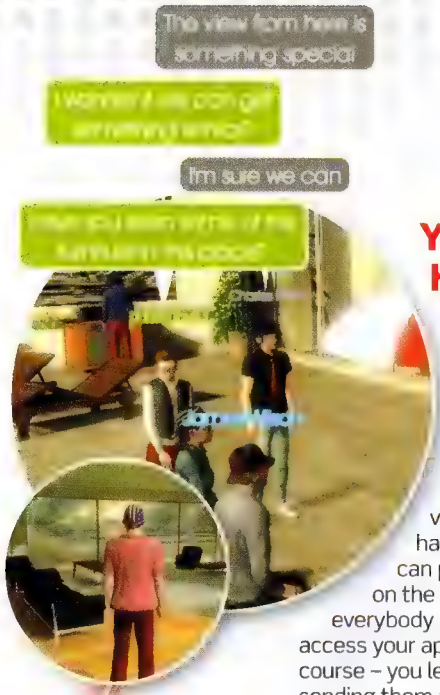


Scene on screen You'll be able to invite your mates to watch your hard drive content screened at the cinema.

The cinema

You'll be able to watch game trailers and user-generated content – like Youtube, but better quality – as well as films. There's no word on cost, but surely completing Spider-Man 3 should be good for a ticket to see the flick?

"Expect to see Hitler strutting round within seconds of the service going live"



Your Home

Your apartment comes with your account and you're free to lavish it with new wallpaper and furniture, or even pictures or videos from your hard drive – so you can put holiday snaps on the walls. Not everybody will be able to access your apartment, of course – you let friends in by sending them an invite.

Character customisation

These are like the Miis you might have seen on a Nintendo Wii, except even more customisable. Heads, legs, hair, facial hair and accessories are all editable, and Phil Harrison promises that face-creating options will get more advanced in time. Expect to see Borat and Hitler strutting around within *seconds* of the service going live.

cinema service that'll let users generate their own content. And as an authoritative v-flick at Microsoft, they're eschewing the hardware giant's Achievement Points in favour of the Hall Of Fame, a gigantic building reminiscent of the Senate Council from Star Wars just waiting for you to jam it with trophies. MySpace? Why post comments on each others' pages when you can hang out in your own flat, Bluetooth chatting in real time, displaying holiday snaps on the walls and subjecting everyone to your indie music collection via your virtual stereo.

First impressions, then: at the moment, *Home*'s less *Grand Theft Auto* and more Ikea catalogue – we're talking minimalist lines and tranquil gardens, peaceful ponds and lovely trees. That'll change, though – Home's going to be funded by advertising, so it's only a matter of time before every games company in the world's putting gigantic flashing billboards in the fields. Similarly, the outfit selections look a bit 'Gap advert' at the moment, but once the collective imagination of the PlayStation 3 generation gets around it, expect it to be huge. Beta testing starts in April – we'll be moving into our flat shortly afterwards. Drop in and see us in September, when the whole thing launches properly.

I wanna hold your handheld Your virtual PSP will probably get more use than your *actual* PSP...

Virtual PSP

Your Virtual PSP is how you access all the features and options of *Home*, and lets you hop between 'bookmarked' spaces – which should prove useful when the world expands.

Hall Of Fame

This is where your in-game achievements are stored as 3D Trophies and video to be browsed by awed gamers. You can rearrange them at your leisure, so give that *Killzone* On Hard trophy pride of place.

Trophy cabinet Sony will also display icons to demonstrate trophies available in games yet to come.

PS3 Special

Welcome Home > Take a tour of your virtual flat

Dance revolution As well as chatting, you'll be able to show your feelings with body language – from a simple shrug to a Crouch-style robo-dance. Sexy!

Changing rooms Posters, embedded HD video and even websites can be slapped on the walls in *Home* – keeping it free by raking in the advertising cash from big business.

Sound as a pound You can listen to MP3s via virtual stereos, and they're distance-sensitive – so the closer your avatar gets, the louder the music will be.

Game fella You'll eventually be able to add your own pool tables and game machines to your pad, so you don't have to venture out into the Gamespace.

Ikea idea There are no limitations on furniture except for what you can cram in, and it'll all be physically moveable – as Sony's Phil Harrison demonstrated by kicking a virtual Bravia down the stairs.

Home truths > All your Home questions answered

Can I change my look?

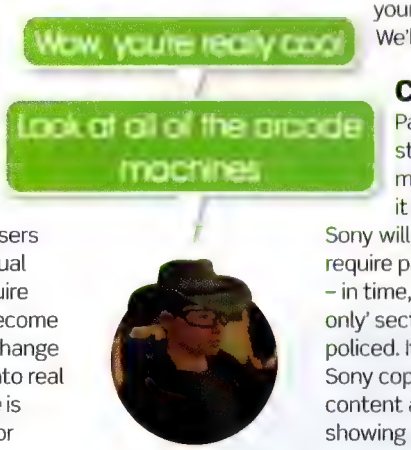
Yes. Accurate rendition of yourself not getting enough attention? Then you'll be able to chisel up those cheekbones, streamline that nose and firm up those shoulders with a set of RPG-style menus any time you like. You can change clothes on a whim, obviously – but we're not yet clear on whether you'll be able to shift gender, so you might want to think before you doom yourself to endless cyber-pestering as a pretend lady.

How do I get more stuff?

Several ways. Some items – like promotional T-shirts for games like *Heavenly Sword* – will be provided free by publishers touting their products. Other clothes and items will be earned via in-game achievements. But expect to pay nominal amounts of real cash for more exclusive furniture and kit. We'll take a Kratos-style godly throne, ta.

Can I expand my property?

Good question. In *Second Life*, users can create and sell stuff for virtual cash, which can be used to acquire more land – so it's possible to become a property magnate, and even change your hard-earned wealth back into real money. How this'll work in *Home* is unclear – will you be rewarded for achievements, able to auction off a car you've pimped in *NFS* or simply batter your online account some more? We'll know soon.



Can I be a sex horse?

Part of *Second Life*'s popularity stems from its tolerance for more 'bohemian' lifestyles – but it isn't clear how much smut Sony will permit. Initially the service will require parental consent for under-18s – in time, we might see special 'adults-only' sections that are less strictly policed. It'll be interesting to see how Sony cope with user-generated content and prevent people from showing bongo in the cinema.

Isn't it just like Second Life? > The PC GAMER verdict

Online worlds like these have been around for a while on the PC. The most popular by far is *Second Life*, so we asked sister magazine PC Gamer's resident *Second Life* expert, Tom Francis, what we can expect from *Home*.

How does Home compare to Second Life?
They're both free virtual worlds rather than games, so you walk around talking to people rather than killing anything. They're really just like a virtual pub: you hang out with your mates, and sometimes get talking to other people who wander through. The main difference is that *Second Life* is full of crazy stuff the players have made - buildings, sculptures, vehicles, minigames, malls - whereas Home is crafted by Sony. The upshot of that is that *Second Life* is garish but a great place to explore, whereas Home is a nicer-looking place to hang out and chat. And you're not regularly interrupted by giant floating penises people have made.

How did Second Life develop from day one? When did it devolve into madness?
It started out as a blank stretch of land, and everything on it's been created by players. They can create and trade everything from body-parts to pre-made buildings. Loads of the stuff players create is ugly, bad or downright offensive – I've seen a giant floating penis crash into the World Trade Centre – but most of it's interesting and some is incredible. That's why *Home* seems a bit restrictive to me, and why we're much more excited about *Little Big Planet*.

What can we expect from that?
It's by the guys who created an insane PC game called *Ragdoll Kung-Fu*, in which you had to stay high on magic mushrooms during fights, so expect madness. It lets players create more or less whatever they like, bolting stuff together, plastering it with their photos and uploading it for all to see, so expect, well, giant floating penises.

But once players really sink their teeth into it, we're going to see some amazing levels, minigames and creations – SL has shown us that some players are more creative and talented than any developer in the world.

CO-OP PLAY AT A NEW LEVEL

The most creative game on PS3 is... LittleBigPlanet

Pub Sony | **Dev** Media Molecule | **ETA** TBA

Original, colourful, cuter than a baby panda in a sailor suit – if you don't fall in love with *Little Big Planet* after watching the trailer, your soul's officially a husk.

The premise of *LBP* is simple – bimble through a succession of environments using realistic physics to clamber across the scenery – but the fun's in the details. Take your character – you can use the analogues to control his arms, so you can make him wave, dance, or even play air guitar. You cooperate with other players to get over tougher obstacles, using your combined body weight to roll larger objects or weigh down seesaws. Once you've mastered the nuances of the control system, you'll be able to use your skills – and any objects you've found on your travels – to create your own levels. Editing's simple, using a toolbar similar to the Cross Media Bar to let you combine objects in all sorts of ways – place an apricot in your level, for instance, and you can stick a pair of eyes and a smile on it. You'll also be able to design or import stickers you've made with a digital camera, slapping them onto the scenery. Once they're done you can invite other users to your patch to explore. *LBP*'s going to live or die on the strength of its community, but since everyone's desperate to play it, that shouldn't be a problem.

See, shell You can set up co-op puzzles – you'll need many characters to lift a shell onto a switch, for instance.

Deeply zippy If this isn't the cutest game character ever, we're an orangutan's uncle. Sorry Loco Roco.

Snap happy You can take save shots of your best moments and share them out online.

All aboard

The beauty of LBP is that objects react as you'd expect them to in response to prodding, nudging and pulling. That means that if you roll an apricot into a football, it'll nudge it – and the more characters you can pile onto a skateboard, the faster you can fling it down a hill...

RATCHETING UP PS3'S LIMITS

The prettiest game on the planet will be...

Ratchet And Clank: Tools Of Destruction

Pub Sony | **Dev** Insomniac Games | **ETA** Autumn

Best new weapon? It's called the Groovitron. The latest addition to *Ratchet and Clank*'s already massive arsenal makes enemies dance to a grenade-style disco ball (see bottom right). But you still can't help thinking that they've just put it in to show how well Insomniac can 'do' lightshows on PS3.

After the arena-based *Ratchet: Gladiator*, the furry Lombax and his shiny pal are going back to their platforming roots for their PS3 debut. A new villain called Tachyon's enlisted Captain Qwark to kill all Lombaxes and... you know what? Forget the plot. Just think about enormous, Fifth Element-style levels, stunning 3D space combat, genuine two-player Clank-control sections and a new gun called the Tornado Launcher. And be happy.

"Enemies dance to a grenade-style disco ball"

Ratchet & Clank

"A cod man controlling a yellow version of kid's TV favourite Bertha"

X Factory If you can see it, you can explore it, and the world teems with incredibly rich ambient detail.

Fish Element A cod man controlling a yellow version of kid's TV fave Bertha? That's how we see it.

Easter pit to fight The enemy are dancing thanks to the Groovitron's grenades stunning effect, no?

THE GDC TRAILER REVEALED

We've seen it – but how does it compare to *that* E3 trailer?

Killzone 2

Pub Sony | **Dev** Guerilla | **ETA** 2008

Enviroments were a touch jaggier and more subdued than the E3 trailer, sadly, but still quite beautiful.

Character models looked superb on the new trailer. Expressive, realistic, these impressed us greatly.

Animation wasn't as smooth as the E3 footage, but at least it was in-game. It jerked at times, mind you.

Vehicles? Just the tanks so far, massive machines of destruction. These should be driveable too.

Right. Contrary to what you may have heard, *Killzone 2* was at GDC. A trailer was shown at a pre-keynote speech press briefing that we attended. It was, said Sony boss Phil Harrison, to showcase what can be done with the PlayStation Edge dev tools, not the game. But we'll see. Due to Sony restrictions, you can't see it on the net. But it went like this...

Heavy, doom-laden classical music kicks in. An urban warzone appears. It looks like in-game action – *genuine* in-game action. The Helghast are in a shootout with human commandos. It looks... dusty, but also quite beautiful.

The humans are losing the battle, and several dart into a nearby house. One falls – in super slow motion – as he reaches the door, showcasing how superb the character models are. His compatriots have no time to help and run inside, pursued by the Helghast. Outside, a massive tank rolls into view, thundering off blasts into alleyways. The screen darkens again. "More at E3 in July 2007," says the message. We breathe out, impressed if not blown away. Some have griped about it not looking the equal of *that* E3 trailer. It's true that it doesn't, but it still looks excellent to us. *Killzone 2* breaks cover in July, and we'll be first with details.

Explosions looked ace: huge, expansive and violent. Great particle physics as well. No less impressive than before, these.

EYES OF THE WORLD ON THIS

The most anticipated game ever is...

Grand Theft Auto 4

Pub Take 2 | **Dev** Rockstar Games | **ETA** October

The first teaser trailer is on the internet, but as we write Rockstar's killer app is strictly under wraps. Of course – it'll be nothing short of phenomenal. The development team's around 150-strong – three times the number of people working on a typical EA game – with 100+ voice actors for dialogue. How big will the game be? Well, with the Oct 19 release date set in stone, it's improbable to expect a world the size of *San Andreas*. Instead, we're anticipating a smaller, city-sized landscape with more depth – more explorable locations and building damage. Sound too small? You madman. But episodic content means other cities could be added later to make it bigger. Location? We're saying New York/Liberty City – and bracing ourselves to be made fools of.

TOP BARNACLE PHYSICS

Setting new standards for in-game likenesses with...

Pirates of the Caribbean

Pub Disney | **Dev** Eurocom | **ETA** July 25

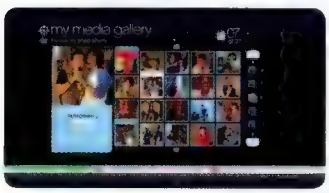
Hi-res face scans for Geoffrey Rush, Orlando Bloom and Depp? Check. Flawlessly motion-captured recreation of the Captain Jack swagger? Yep. Individual strands of hair? Jee-sus. But while the star treatment lavished on the likenesses of Pirates' leads is impressive enough, what's breathtaking is the bad lads.

According to Eurocom, the crew of the Flying Dutchmen, as pictured here, are what you'll see in the game. We're talking the sort of barnacle-rendering that's never been possible before, with 100 individual characters that you'll be able to chat to, fight or – in extreme cases – hit with special 'Captain Jack' moves like a plank in the face or a handful of sand in the gills. The blend of melee combat and individual duels looks solid, so there's only really one question left – just how detailed is virtual Knightley?

Hammer On This is Maccus, whose name's Celtic for 'hammer'. Check out that detailed nasal scar.

SingStar

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** October



Expect 350 songs at launch, plus a new 30-song pack every month (with itunes-style prices, of £0.79-£0.99 per tune), with wireless mics. Invite people over, download songs and party all night. And when they've gone home, you can share footage online via Eye3.

Uncharted: Drake's Fortune

Pub Sony | **Dev** Naughty Dog | **ETA** Winter

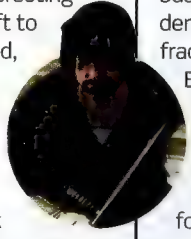
We're told that the hero of this Raider-esque game uses a combo of 'guns, charm and luck' to progress, prompting speculation that he'll – what? Use rabbits'-foot power-ups to make enemy weapons jam? Chat up receptionists?

Whatever, he'll need the help – sources suggest the game's set in the Bermuda Triangle...

The Outsider

Pub Frontier | **Dev** Frontier | **ETA** TBC

Though *The Outsider*'s premise is standard – you're a CIA operative wrongly declared public enemy number one – the interesting thing is that you're left to decide how to proceed, with a dynamic storyline that develops through other characters' motivations and reactions . Don't think 'Good' and 'Bad' endings – think about playing through in a completely different way from anyone else. Sounds intriguing...



Assassin's Creed

Pub Ubisoft | **Dev** Ubisoft | **ETA** Dec

It's massive. We've been told that the huge, bustling city seen in early demos only represents a fraction of the world.

Expect grander locations like Babylon, plus Colossus-style horse rides over forest and deserts. And will the combat match the fluidity and grace of the climbing? We'll know very soon...

Pirates Of The Caribbean

"The sort of barnacle-rendering that's never been possible before"

Shell shading Crew-members get more barnacle-heavy the longer they serve as pirates.

Arch villain Will this sort of spine detail be possible even on PS3? We'll reserve judgement for that.

Hard shell Hadras here keeps his head in a conch shell. Not useful when you're on the run.

Army Of Two

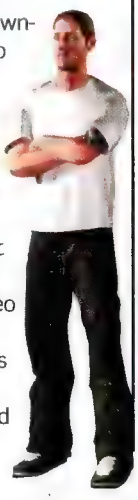
Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **ETA** June

The latest teaser for EA's co-op-only shooter shows the lighter side of teamwork – with leg-ups gone awry and rappel ropes dropped – before showing the Two working together properly. There's also a teasing glimpse of the cover dynamic – you can rip off car doors to use as shields,

The aggressive macho banter might get a bit abrasive if they keep it up all game, mind you. We'll see.

Skate

Pub EA | **Dev** EA | **ETA** Autumn

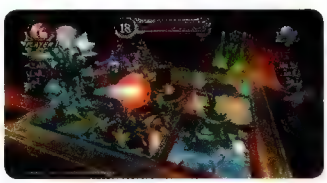


The more sensible, down-to-earth alternative to *Tony Hawk* continues to impress, with the stick-based control system proving just tricky enough to give you a well-earned sense of achievement from a simple kickflip. The inclusion of a video editing mode sounds like classic stuff – let's hope it gets a few subscribers. This could be *very* good.

Eye3

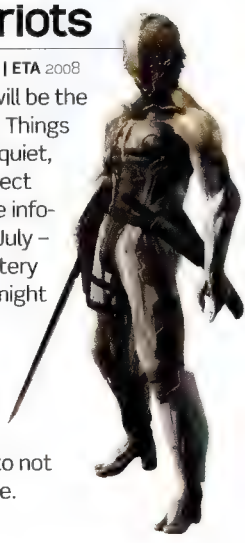
Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony | **ETA** September

Eye Of Judgement might be a bit 'meh', but the new Eye3 camera astounds. It's set to be released with six PS Store-style games in September, features a directional mic, and will capture 640x480 TV quality pics – use it to chat with other users across the Playstation network.



MGS4: Guns Of The Patriots

Pub Konami | **Dev** Koj | **ETA** 2008



Obviously, this will be the best game ever. Things have gone a bit quiet, but you can expect another massive info-splurge in early July – though the mystery of Snake's age might stay unresolved until the game finally appears. We'd like to come in totally cold, if we can, to not spoil the surprise.

NOW *THAT'S* USING THE FORCE

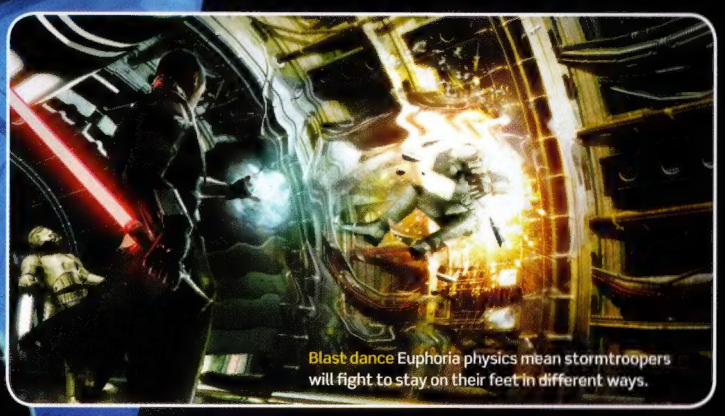
The new standard for next-gen physics...

Star Wars: The Force Unleashed

Pub Activision | Dev Lucasarts | ETA November

Grabbing a lightsaber? Knocking over some droids? Meh. When you've got the infamous Euphoria engine at your fingertips, you can get a bit more creative than that. That means firing a stormtrooper through a wall like a cannonball, or using a pile of wreckage to crush one puny Jedi. Yes, Jedi – *Force Unleashed* sees you taking on the role of Darth Vader's previously unmentioned apprentice, doing his evil master's bidding and murdering anyone who gets in his way or sees what he's up to. So: ridiculous amounts of power at your disposal? Check. Carté blanche to murder everyone? Check. Yeah, we're ready to head for the dark side.

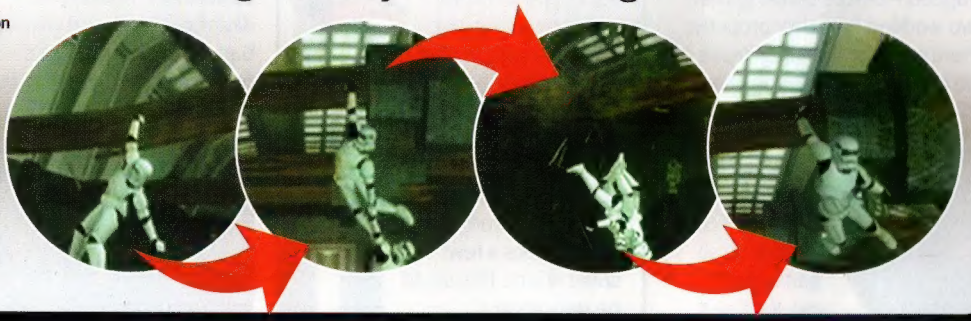
Light stuff Use force lightning to attack huge Rancor beasts - as tamed by Luke in Return Of The Jedi.



Blast dance Euphoria physics mean stormtroopers will fight to stay on their feet in different ways.

The Euphoria Engine > New intelligent AI system makes games real

'Euphoria' technology is the main reason why *Star Wars* on PS3 is so exciting. This technology applies complex physics to characters and materials to make them behave as they would in real life. For 3D human models it's a simulation of body, muscles and the motor nervous system, prompting characters to protect themselves from danger. A stormtrooper is tossed at a wooden bar and he grabs on. Another follows and he grabs on to the other's legs. Then the bar starts to splinter and give way, before snapping off completely and sending the troopers to their doom. None of this is scripted – it's all synthesized on the fly, meaning levels in Euphoria games will never behave the same twice.



OUR NAME'S DOWN, WE'RE IN

The antidote to stealth games is... The Club

Pub Sega | **Dev** Bizarre Creations | **ETA** August

Sick of tiptoeing, crawling, gluing your back to the wall and holding your breath? Then you'll want to join *The Club* – an underground betting ring where Solid Snake wouldn't even get a foot inside the door. Billed as a racing game with human targets instead of corners, the emphasis is on speed and style. Shoot a man, and you've got a couple of seconds to shoot the next one before your combo meter ticks dry. Shoot another and another, and the meter ticks faster, forcing you to pick your targets and plan your route. With levels intended to be sprinted through in three minutes or less, advanced shooters will be able to kill every enemy in one extended combo. Sounds impressive.

Russian around It's a race against the clock, with headshots, or clinical disarms, building your score.

Half Life 2

Pub EA | **Dev** Valve | **ETA** September

Innovative Portal mode aside, this sets new standard for value. Each of the five elements could be a full game in its own right.

FORGET SAFARI PACKAGES

The game that's a virtual holiday... Afrika

Pub Sony | **Dev** Sony
ETA TBA

Though rumours originally suggested that you'd be a photographer snapping the wildlife in *Afrika*, it's now being hinted that Sony's safari piece might be an integral part of *Home*, allowing you to jump from your house to the grassland for a wander round. No word on whether you can be eaten, mind you, but we'll bring you news as and when.

THE T-VIRUS STRIKES BACK

The next-gen sequel to the best game of the last five years... Resident Evil 5

Pub Capcom | **Dev** Capcom | **ETA** 2008

The good news? While *Resi 5's* been in hiding, we know for a fact it's up and running in Japan – don't ask. Rumours suggest teaser footage might leak in the next month or so, before an 'official' unveiling around July, the new date for the mini-E3 games show. Sprinting zombies? An abandoned South American village? The return of Chris Redfield? We're sure Umbrella are in there somewhere, but for a game of this pedigree, we're willing to wait. Impatiently, as it might be.

Chris, kiss, bang, bang Awesome stubble aside, we can't wait to see more weapons.

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